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DIGITAL ENGLISH DAILY, BENGALURU

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MODI SWORN IN AS PM FOR 3RD TERM

Modi equals Nehru's record; JP Nadda, Shivraj Singh Chouhan, HD Kumaraswamy & V Somanna take oath

BJP leader Narendra Modi takes oath for the third consecutive term as Prime Minister of India, administered by President Droupadi Murmu at the Rashtrapati Bhavan in New Delhi on Sunday; HD Kumaraswamy and V Somanna take oath as ministers **PHOTOS: ANI/PTI**

NEW DELHI, 9 JUNE

Narendra Modi was sworn in as Prime Minister at the Rashtrapati Bhavan here on Sunday, becoming only the second PM after Jawaharlal Nehru to secure a third consecutive term.

Along with Modi, who took oath in the name of God, senior BJP leaders Rajnath Singh, Amit Shah, Nitin Gadkari, Nirmala Sitharaman and S Jaishankar were sworn in as cabinet ministers, indicating the Prime Minister's emphasis on continuity and experience as they also held senior positions in his second term.

Party President JP Nadda returned to the cabinet after five years, while former Madhya Pradesh chief minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan and ex-Haryana CM Manohar Lal Khattar were the fresh faces in the Modi cabinet. BJP leaders Piyush Goyal, Jyotiraditya Scindia, Dharmendra Pradhan and Bhupender Yadav, who were earlier in the Rajya Sabha but have now been elected to the Lok Sabha, were among those retained as ministers.

Former Assam chief minister Sarbananda Sonowal, Ashwini Vaishnaw, Virendra Kumar, Pralhad Joshi, Giriraj Singh and Jual Oram, all from BJP, were among those sworn in as ministers. President Droupadi Murmu administered the oath of office to them. Modi, 73, first became prime minister in 2014 and then returned to office in 2019. He was re-elected to Lok Sabha from Varanasi. Among the allies of BJP, which did not get a majority on its own this time, HAM (Secular) chief Jitan Ram Manjhi, JD(U) leader Lalan Singh and TDP's K Ram Mohan Naidu also took the oath of office as ministers.

JD(S) leader HD Kumaraswamy, and Lingayat leader V Somanna from Karnataka were also attended the oath taking ceremony. JD (S) leader HD Deve Gowda said the results of the Lok Sabaha polls reflected the ugly campaigning of Congress party. He said, "Congress assumed they have done better this time, but in states like Karnataka, Himachal, Telangana, they have floundered."

Those present on the occasion included Vice President Jagdeep Dhankhar, Chief Justice of India DY Chandrachud, TDP President Chandrababu Naidu and JD(U) Chief Nitish Kumar.

It is, however, a tribute to his towering political presence that the BJP's third-best tally of 240 seats is being seen as a disappointment by the party's ardent supporters and projected as a "moral defeat" by the Congress whose own tally of 99 seats, its third worst, is being hailed by the opposition party.

The BJP-led National Democratic Alliance has won 293 seats (out of 543), which Modi has noted is the biggest success for any pre-poll alliance when a single party did not get a majority.

Top leaders from India's neighbourhood and the Indian Ocean region -- Maldives President Mohamed Muizzu, Bangladesh Premier Sheikh Hasina, Nepal Prime Minister Pushpa Kamal Dahal 'Prachanda', Sri Lankan President Ranil Wickremesinghe, Mauritius Prime Minister Pravind Kumar Jugnauth, Bhutanese PM Tshering Tobgay and Vice-President of Seychelles Ahmed Afif -- were special guests at the function. In addition to political leaders and eminent persons from different walks of life, members from the transgender community as well as sanitation workers and labourers, who were involved in the construction of the new parliament building, also attended the swearing-in ceremony of Modi and the new council of ministers. Nearly 9,000 people were estimated to be present at the forecourts of the Rashtrapati Bhavan for the grand event. —*PTI*

>>>More on Pages 2 & 3

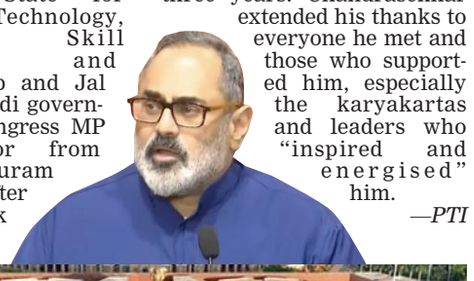
18-year stint in public service has ended: Rajeev

T'PURAM, 9 JUNE

Former Union Minister of State Rajeev Chandrasekhar on Sunday said his 18-year-long stint in public service has come to an end.

Chandrasekhar, who was Minister of State for Information Technology, Electronics, Skill Development and Entrepreneurship and Jal Shakti in last Modi government, lost to Congress MP Shashi Tharoor from Thiruvananthapuram Lok Sabha seat after a neck-and-neck fight in the 2024 general elections.

In a post on social media platform X, he said he never intended to end his 18 years of public service as a candidate who lost an election. He also said that he had the privilege to serve with PM Modi for three years. Chandrasekhar extended his thanks to everyone he met and those who supported him, especially the karyakartas and leaders who "inspired and energised" him. —*PTI*



TEAM MODI 3.0

61 BJP ministers	**11** From NDA allies	**30** Cabinet ministers
36 Ministers of State	**43** Ministers with 3+ terms	**72** TOTAL MINISTERS

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VK Pandian quits politics after BJD's defeat in Odisha

BHUBANESWAR, 9 JUNE

Exactly six months and 13 days after joining politics, former bureaucrat VK Pandian on Sunday announced his withdrawal from active politics following the BJD's drubbing in both the assembly and Lok Sabha polls, but said he would keep Odisha in the core of his heart and 'Guru Naveen Babu' in his breath. In a video message, Pandian said his only intention to join politics was to assist Naveen Patnaik, which is why he did not contest in the 2024 elections. He also apologised to the people and BJD leaders and workers if they held him responsible for the electoral loss. "My intent in joining politics was only to assist Naveen Babu, and now I consciously decide to withdraw from active politics. I am sorry if this campaign narrative against me and take part in BJD's loss," he said. —*PTI*

>>>More on Page 3

The bus carrying pilgrims on their way to the Shiv Khori temple **PHOTO: PTI**

9 dead as terrorists open fire at bus full of pilgrims in J&K

JAMMU, 9 JUNE

- Initial reports suggest two masked terrorists opened fire, hitting the driver near Kanda Chandi Morh and causing the vehicle to crash into a gorge. The area falls on the border of Reasi and Rajouri districts, and movement of terrorists was reported there in the past

A bus carrying pilgrims plunged into a deep gorge in Jammu and Kashmir's Reasi district killing nine people on Sunday after suspected terrorists opened fire, officials said. The bus was carrying pilgrims on their way to the Shiv Khori temple, came under attack in Teryath village in Poni area, the officials said citing initial reports. A rescue operation was launched and reinforcements from police, army and paramilitary forces rushed to the spot, they said.

According to locals, the bus was on its way from Ransoo near Shiv Khori – a shrine devoted to Lord Shiva – to Katra town, which acts as base camp to the Vaishno Devi shrine in Trikuta hills. Initial reports suggest two masked terrorists opened fire, hitting the driver near Kanda Chandi Morh and causing the vehicle to crash into a gorge. The area falls on the border of Reasi and Rajouri district, and movement of terrorists has been reported there in the past as well. The attack marks a significant escalation in violence in the region. Reasi district has been relatively untouched by terrorist activities compared to neighbouring areas such as Rajouri and Poonch.

Senior Superintendent of Police (SSP) Reasi Mohita Sharma said the driver lost the balance of the bus and fell into a gorge due to the firing. She said the passengers were non-locals and their identities were not confirmed yet.

A joint operation headquarters of the police, Indian Army and CRPF was set up at the site and a multi-dimensional operation was launched to get the attackers.

—*PTI with other Agencies*

NIA makes 1st arrest in Jan killing in Manipur

NEW DELHI, 9 JUN

The National Investigation Agency (NIA) has arrested a militant currently lodged in an Assam jail for his alleged involvement in the killing of four civilians in Manipur's Bishnupur district earlier this year, the probe agency said in a statement on Sunday.

Lunminsei Kipgen alias Langinmang alias Mang alias Levi, a resident of Manipur, was arrested on Saturday by the NIA from Central Jail, Lokhra, in Guwahati under provisions of the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act and the Arms Act, it said. He is the first accused to be arrested for the gruesome killings on 18 January, when armed assailants brutally murdered four civilians near the water treatment plant at Ningthoukhong Kha Khunou, Bishnupur, the NIA statement said.

"The NIA on Saturday arrested one person, currently in Guwahati jail in another case, in connection with the killing of four civilians in Manipur's Bishnupur district," it added. —*PTI*

NIA **PHOTO: PTI**

- Lunminsei Kipgen alias Langinmang alias Mang alias Levi, a resident of Manipur, was arrested on Saturday by the NIA

Plea in SC seeks probe into 4 June market crash

NEW DELHI, 9 JUNE

A plea has been filed in the Supreme Court, seeking directions to the Centre and the Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) to submit a detailed report into the stock market crash on the day of election results on June 4, when investors lost billions of rupees.

The plea, filed by advocate Vishal Tiwari, also sought direction to the government and the SEBI to submit a status report on the orders given on January 3 for considering the suggestion of the expert committee, headed by Justice A M Sapre, made in its report on the PIL in Adani-Hindenburg matter.

The top court had said the Centre and the SEBI should constructively consider the suggestions of the expert committee and take any further action necessary to strengthen the regulatory framework, protect investors and ensure the orderly functioning of the securities market.

PHOTO: PTI

'It is said that after announcements of exit polls in respect to the Lok Sabha 2024 results, the share market went high, but when the actual results were announced the market crashed,' the plea said.

'Stock market volatility again emerged. As per news reports, the loss was Rs 20 lakh crore,' the petition said

Following the exit poll prediction of a resounding BJP victory, BSE benchmark Sensex shot up on Monday by 2,507 points or 3.4 percent to settle at a new closing peak of 76,469. —*PTI*

CHHATTISGARH ATTACK

6 Naxalites killed in encounter carried total bounty of ₹38 lakh

JAGDALPUR, 9 JUNE

Six Naxalites killed in an encounter with security forces in Chhattisgarh's Narayanpur district two days back were dreaded cadres carrying a cumulative bounty of Rs 38 lakh, according to police.

This operation is so far the biggest attack by security forces on People's Liberation Guerrilla Army (PLGA) company no. 6, which is considered a pillar of the attacking force of Naxalites, the police said on Saturday.

The encounter took place near Gobel and Thulthuli villages under Orcha police station limits on Friday. While police earlier said seven Naxalites were killed, they later revised the toll to six that included three women.

PHOTO: PTI

Four of the six slain ultras were identified as Masiya alias Mesiya Mandavi, 32, sniper team commander and platoon no. 2 section 'A' commander, Ramesh Korram, 29, deputy commander, Sanni alias Sundari, party member, and Sajanti Poyam, who was a member of the PLGA company no. 6 under east Bastar division of Maoists, the IG said.

The main objective is to protect people living in remote forests and difficult geographical conditions in Bastar division from Maoist ideology so that development and peace can be established in the region, Bastar and Dantewada Superintendents of Police Shalabh Sinha and Gaurav Rai said in the press conference.

So far this year, 123 Naxalites have been killed and 136 firearms recovered in 71 encounters in Bastar division, comprising Kanker, Kondagaon, Narayanpur, Bastar, Bijapur, Dantewada and Sukma districts, police said. —*PTI*

CONGRESS TO TOUR UP FROM 15 JUNE

LUCKNOW, 9 JUNE

Congress will start the Dhanyavad Yatra from 15 June in Lucknow across all Assembly constituencies in the state. Encouraged by the success of INDIA alliance, Congress aims to concentrate on Mission 2027.

While the party was successful in winning six Lok Sabha seats in the elections, it had to face defeat on six seats by less than 50 thousand votes.

Through this yatra, the party will be the first to reach out to the voters and express their gratitude to them and also express their resolve not to be left behind in the preparation for the upcoming assembly elections. The party wants to present itself as a strong partner in front of Samajwadi Party before the assembly elections. This will benefit both the parties in the elections. — *Salar with agencies*

Modi has given me an opportunity: HDK

'Want to work honestly and bring good name,' says HD Kumaraswamy

BENGALURU, 9 JUNE

JD(S) leader HD Kumaraswamy on Sunday said Prime Minister Narendra Modi has given him an opportunity to serve as a Minister in the new Cabinet that was sworn in on Sunday evening, and credited the people of "Kannada Naadu" for it.

While maintaining that he has not placed a demand for any portfolio, the former Chief Minister reiterated his desire to be the Agriculture Minister. "Under Narendra Modi's leadership, a decision has been made, after discussion with BJP national President, JP Nadda; Home Minister, Amit Shah and Defence Minister, Rajnath Singh. They have identified me and given me an opportunity," Kumaraswamy said in New Delhi.

He said he intended to serve the people of the country and the State honestly, using the opportunity. "To implement Narendra Modi's vision I want to work honestly and thereby bring a good name to him and to our State. This is my resolve."

The son of JD(S) patriarch HD Deve Gowda has made no secret of his desire to become the Agriculture Minister and has repeatedly expressed it before and after the polls.

By winning the Mandya Lok Sabha seat, the former CM has not only managed to regain the JD(S)' lost bastion, but has also successfully managed to retrieve his party's lost political relevance in Karnataka, by allying with BJP. Kumaraswamy defeated Venkataramane Gowda (also known as Star Chandru) of the Congress by a margin of 2,84,620 votes.

Noting that he has left it to the PM to decide and has made no demand for any portfolio, Kumaraswamy said, "If I get it, I will be happy, because I've been interested in Agriculture since the beginning."

"The Prime Minister has reposed faith in me, he has respect towards my father. I'm not interested in making money. Under Modi's leadership, I want to stay among people. I want to connect with people to resolve their issues, if I get such a portfolio, it will help me to serve as a Minister better," he said.

Kumaraswamy said JD(S) performance in the Lok Sabha polls and his win is a "revival" for the party. "Narendra Modi's leadership and Kannadigas have given me and my party a revival. Kannadiga's have accepted the BJP-JD(S) alliance and have given me the strength. I thank the people of the State, especially voters of Mandya and Bengaluru Rural segments," he said. *—PTI*

> **The Prime Minister has reposed faith in me, he has respect towards my father. I'm not interested in making money. Under Modi's leadership, I want to stay among people. I want to connect with people to resolve their issues, if I get such a portfolio, it will help me to serve as a Minister better**
>
> -HD Kumaraswamy, JD(S) leader

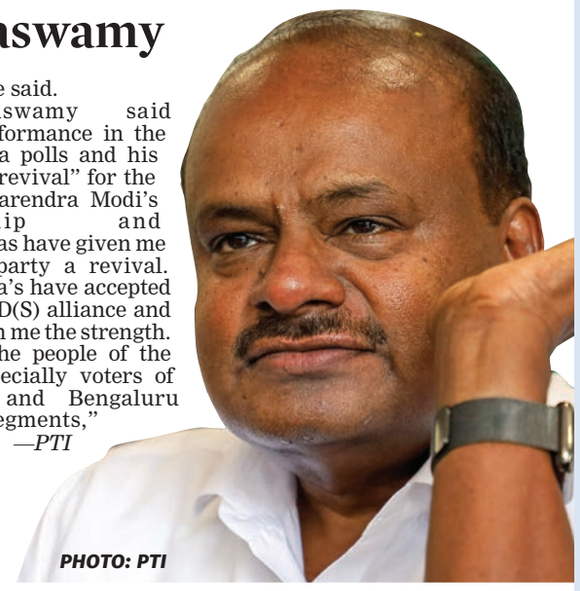


PHOTO: PTI

HM urges PM to correct 'past mistakes'

BENGALURU, 9 JUNE

Home Minister and Congress leader G Parameshwara congratulated Prime Minister-designate Narendra Modi on his third term, as he was sworn in as the PM on Sunday evening. "In the last 10 years, the people have suffered a lot. Work should be done from the people's point of view. Let's correct all the mistakes made in the past. Ministers are desperate to protect the State's interests," Parameshwara said.PM Modi took the oath of office at 7.15pm on Sunday along with his council of ministers in a ceremony at Rashtrapati Bhavan. National Democratic Alliance unanimously passed a resolution to elect Narendra Modi as their leader on 5 June. *—ANI*

Will fulfil expectations: Somanna on being chosen for Modi's cabinet

BENGALURU, 9 JUNE

Senior BJP leader and Former Karnataka Minister V Somanna on Sunday said he will honestly work towards fulfilling the expectations of the party leadership on him as the minister in the Narendra Modi cabinet, which will be sworn in this evening.

He said he has no expectations regarding the portfolio and will serve in the department assigned to him by the prime minister with an aim to ensure that the government's benefits reach the people.

V Somanna PHOTO: PTI

"Our party gave me an opportunity from Tumkur, I won from there, I have fulfilled the various responsibilities given to me by the party. Considering all this our state and central leadership have given me this opportunity. I thank them and the people of Tumkur, and workers and leaders of both BJP and JD(S)," Somanna said.

While speaking to reporters in New Delhi after meeting with Modi, he said, he will work honestly to fulfil the responsibility given to him, by serving the people of the country, using his 45 years' political experience.

"The challenge before me is to work to ensure that the benefits provided by the government reach the people of the country equally," he added. Somanna won the Tumkur Lok Sabha segment by a margin of 1,75,594 votes, against Congress' SP Muddahanumegowda. *—PTI*

Deve Gowda lauds PM Modi on historic third consecutive mandate

NEW DELHI, 9 JUNE

Janata Dal (Secular) patron and former prime minister HD Deve Gowda on Sunday congratulated Narendra Modi for securing a third term as Prime Minister and termed it a historic occasion. He also apologised for being unable to attend the oath ceremony due to "frail health."

Taking to the social media platform X, Gowda said, "I have written to Shri Narendra Modi on the historic occasion of being sworn in for the 3rd straight term this evening. My frail health does not permit me to be present in person, but I will watch the ceremony on TV. Indian democracy is robust, whatever the Congress may say."In a heartfelt congratulatory letter to the Prime Minister-designate, the 91-year-old leader said, "It is a truly historic occasion. As I have said many times in the past, this is the result of his almighty's extraordinary blessing on you. I have no doubt that you will continue to be showered with the Lord's blessing and will continue to serve our great nation with the absolute dedication that we have all become familiar with for a decade."

HD Deve Gowda PHOTO: WIKIPEDIA

Taking a dig at the Opposition, the former Prime Minister said, "The Congress party assumes they have done better this time, but the fact is that in states they run, like Karnataka, Telangana and Himachal Pradesh, they have floundered. They have done relatively well in some other states." *—ANI*

Doni river flowing above danger level

BENGALURU, 9 JUNE

Karnataka State Natural Disaster Monitoring Centre, citing a circular from Central Water Commission, has issued a special advisory for Doni river at Talikot HO site in Vijayapura (Muddebihal taluk), which is flowing above danger level. The present water level is 501.48m with a rising trend of about 7cm per hour. Incidentally, the highest flood level recorded ever here is 502.21m. Meanwhile, the India Meteorological Department has issued an extreme rainfall alert for the next 72 to 84 hours over Krishna catchment areas in Karnataka, Maharashtra, Telangana and Andhra Pradesh. Bengaluru gets intense rainfall Many parts of Bengaluru witnessed short but intense rainfall on Sunday. Parts of coastal Karnataka, Western Ghats and north interior Karnataka also witnessed good rains. The coastal Karnataka has also been issued a high wave alert – Uttara Kanada and Udupi in the range of 1.9m to 2.5m and Dakshina Kannada in the range of 1.7m to 2.1m in the next 48 hours. On Monday, scattered heavy to very heavy with isolated extreme heavy rain and thundershowers are predicted for Uttara Kannada district, while Belagavi, Gadag, Dharwad, Koppal, Bagalkot, Haveri, Vijayapura and Raichur will likely witness thundershowers associated with gusty winds (40-50 kmph). *—PTI*

Mysuru: 3 cops suspended over suicide

CHAMARAJANAGAR, 9 JUNE

Three police officials of KR Nagar station in Mysuru district were suspended after a man ended life and three of his family members attempted suicide. The suspended officials are Inspector Santhosh Kumar, Assistant Sub Inspector Girish and Head Constable Nagaraj who neglected the complaint of sexual harassment from a family. Mahadeva Nayka, 65, Gouramma, 60, Leelavati, 45, and Rishita, 21, are residents of Chandagala village in KR Nagar taluk. Lokesh, a 35-year-old widower, harassed and blackmailed the family as he wanted to marry Rishita. The family lodged a complaint with KR Nagar police but they allegedly did not take any action . *—Salar News*

ALL SMILES

Karnataka Deputy Chief Minister DK Shivakumar meets AICC General Secretary Priyanka Gandhi, in New Delhi on Sunday PHOTO: PTI

Kodagu housing project lacks basic facilities, left abandoned

MADIKERI, 9 JUNE

Condition of the most of the houses which were built by the government after the massive flood and landslide in Kodagu district in 2018 has deteriorated due to the lack of essential infrastructure and lack of maintenance.

After the flood in 2018, the government constructed houses costing Rs 9.98 lakh each for these families.

However, of the 140 houses built in Madikeri taluk's Galibeedu village panchayat, at least 50 remain uninhabited.

The sub-divisional officer acknowledged the ongoing work by the Rajiv Gandhi Housing Board, which has delayed the official handover of the barangay and thus the provision of necessary facilities.

The houses, located 10km from Madikeri, were completed in multiple phases.

75 houses were finished and distributed to affected beneficiaries in 2021, but only 25 families moved in.

An additional 55 houses were completed after 2021, yet 40 of these still await allocation. More than 90 houses have deteriorated due to a lack of essential infrastructure, including roads, drinking water, and electricity. Overgrowth and forest encroachments have turned the area into a near-wilderness, creating a hazardous living environment for the few residents.

The local citizens said that the roads are so damaged that even two-wheelers struggle to pass, making the 3km journey to the Galibeedu government school challenging, especially during the rainy season.

The drainage system is inadequate, and there is only one water tank for 25 families, which does not supply enough water.

They said that despite repeated appeals to the District Collector, MLAs, and ministers, their pleas have gone unanswered. *—Salar News*

Nijjar case: Canada intel chief visited India twice this year

NEW DELHI, 9 JUNE

Canada's intelligence agency chief David Vigneault paid two under-the-wraps visits to India in February and March to apprise Indian officials of the case relating to the killing of Khalistani extremist Hardeep Singh Nijjar, people familiar with the matter said.

Vigneault, the director of the Canadian Security Intelligence Service (CSIS), is learnt to have shared information that emerged during Ottawa's investigation into the killing. The ties between India and Canada came under severe strain following Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau's allegations in September last year of the "potential" involvement of Indian agents in the killing of Nijjar.

New Delhi rejected Trudeau's charges as "absurd". Vigneault's visits to India came weeks before Canada arrested three Indian nationals -- Karanpreet Singh (28), Kamalpreet Singh,22, and Karan Brar,22, -- on charges of alleged involvement in Nijjar's killing.

Subsequently, a fourth Indian, Amandeep Singh, was arrested by the Canadian authorities. .

The murder is being probed by the Royal Canadian Mounted Police. A government of Canada official said: "We can confirm that the Director of CSIS, David Vigneault, has travelled to India but we do not comment on the nature or substance of closed-door meetings." *—PTI*

Hardeep Singh Nijjar PHOTO: PTI

As of 7 June, as many as 2,760 potholes have to be filled in the City PHOTO: SALAR

Ahead of deadline, only 50 per cent potholes are filled

VAISHNAVI GOPALRAJ
BENGALURU, 9 JUNE

With hardly two weeks left before the deadline to fill up potholes, Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike (BBMP) could fill up only 50 per cent of them, and adding to the misery, 40-50 new potholes are surfaced daily.

On 22 May, Chief Minister Siddaramaiah instructed that all potholes on ward roads and arterial and sub-arterial roads must be filled within one month.

On 22 May, there were around 5,500 potholes on ward roads and 557 potholes on arterial and sub-arterial roads in the City.

The civic body has filled up 2,652 potholes from 23 May to 7 June, and on 4 June alone, 151 potholes were repaired. As of 7 June, as many as 2,760 potholes have to be filled and an additional 28 new potholes were identified in the ward roads and 42 were identified in arterial and sub-arterial roads, according to the data received by Salar News from BBMP.

Officials are now caught between filling existing potholes and keeping track of new ones. Speaking to Salar News, a BBMP Assistant Chief Engineer, who didn't wish to be named, said, "Because of the elections and unpredictable climate, the work was delayed and we hope to fill up the potholes by 22 June." BBMP Technical Chief Engineer Sudhakar KR told Salar News that potholes on arterial and sub-arterial roads will be filled up first before those on the ward roads.

Frustrated citizens

Residents in the City have expressed frustration that deadlines for pothole repairs have been revised by every government with no permanent solutions implemented to address the recurring issue.

The residents say cracks are appearing in the newly filled-up potholes, raising questions about the quality of the materials used in the works. Vishak Nayak, a resident from RR Nagar, told Salar News, "Last week, I saw a few BBMP officials filling the potholes near Anurag Layout. When our area received heavy rainfall, those potholes developed cracks again."Another resident from Hoodi, Adarsh S Lathika told **Salar News** "Every day I have a tricky ride from my apartment to a nearby bakery because there are around 40 small-size potholes and a few big-size potholes in a span of 1km."RR Nagar and Yeshwantpur have the highest number of potholes (1,162) to be filled up in the City, as per the BBMP data. "As it is a traffic-filled area we are managing to finish the work during the non-peak hours," a BBMP Chief Engineer said.

Shortage of bitumen

A couple of ward engineers, requesting for anonymity, the shortage of bitumen is affecting the quality of work. "Bitumen, which is a residue from petroleum distillation, is a key ingredient in filling up the potholes. It's waterproof and acts as a binding agent for other constituents. We are forced to fill up potholes with limited resources," the ward engineers said.

MN Sreehari, traffic engineering advisor & consultant to governments, told Salar News, "The cracks on newly filled-up potholes show that the right amount of bitumen was not used. Bitumen is a strong agent and if it is used correctly, there will not be any cracks on the roads." *—Salar News*

DEPUTY SPEAKER TO BE ELECTED

Lok Sabha to get LoP after 10 years

NEW DELHI, 9 JUNE

With INDIA bloc parties' numbers increasing in the 18th Lok Sabha, the lower house is set to get a leader of the Opposition (LoP) after 10 years, and Opposition leaders also hope that a deputy speaker will be elected soon, a post that had been vacant for the last five years.

The 17th Lok Sabha, which was dissolved on 5 June, did not have a deputy speaker for its full term, and it was the second consecutive term of the lower house without an LoP.

The 17th Lok Sabha did not have a deputy speaker for its full term PHOTO: PTI

All eyes are set at the lower house which will get an LoP, and is also expected to have a deputy speaker, a post which usually goes to the Opposition ranks. While INDIA bloc has not yet held any coordination meeting on its strategy for the Parliament, an Opposition leader said they will mount pressure that the deputy speaker's post is not left vacant this time. "BJP has been rejected by people, they did not elect any deputy speaker in last five years... Hope they have learnt a lesson and will elect a deputy speaker this time," a TMC leader said.

The 17th Lok Sabha, in which BJP was in an absolute majority with 303 seats, elected Om Birla as the Speaker.

In a first, no deputy speaker was elected through its term of five years. *—PTI*

Rajiv Gandhi's statue vandalised in Tripura

AGARTALA, 9 JUNE

A statue of former prime minister Rajiv Gandhi was found vandalised in Tripura's Unakoti district, a Congress MLA said on Sunday. Congress legislator Birajit Sinha alleged that BJP-backed goons were behind the vandalisation of the three-foot statue of Gandhi, which was laid on a concrete structure in Kailashahar sub-division's Govidapur area in 2009 as a mark to pay respect to the former PM. "The statue of ex-prime minister Rajiv Gandhi was found vandalised on Sunday morning. I suspect that the statue was vandalised by a few BJP-backed goons," Sinha told reporters. The legislator demanded the arrest of those involved in the vandalisation of the statue. A statue of Himadri Deb, a renowned cultural activist, was damaged by miscreants in Kagirgaon .—*PTI*

BJP's win, liquor policy to rule Kerala Assembly session

T'PURAM, 9 JUNE

The 28-day Kerala Legislative Assembly session, set to commence on Monday, is expected to be stormy as the opposition Congress-led UDF is likely to target the Left government in the state over a host of issues ranging from the recent liquor policy row to its humiliating defeat in the Lok Sabha polls. The House is also expected to witness an intense blame game between the two traditional fronts over the BJP opening its maiden account in Kerala by winning the Thrissur Lok Sabha seat with a massive majority. The raging controversy over LDF government's liquor policy is also likely to find an echo in the state assembly.—*PTI*

Marathas assaulted for not voting for BJP: Jarange

JALNA, 9 JUNE

Maratha reservation activist Manoj Jarange on Sunday urged Maharashtra Home Minister Devendra Fadnavis to take action against certain people who were attacking Marathas for not voting for the BJP candidate in Beed in the Lok Sabha election. Speaking to reporters on the second day of his indefinite fast at Antarwali Sarathi village, Jarange claimed that Marathas in some villages in Beed district were being assaulted for not voting for BJP's Pankaja Munde, who lost to NCP (SP) candidate Bajrang Sonawane in the recently held polls. He appealed to the home minister and Beed superintendent of police to take action against such violence and urged Maratha youth to maintain peace and communal harmony. The activist said leaders opposing Maratha interests would face consequences in the upcoming Vidhan Sabha elections. Jarange launched an indefinite fast on Saturday, demanding implementation of the draft notification that recognises as Kunbis all blood relatives of Maratha community members and sought a law to identify Kunbis as Marathas. —*PTI*

SP MP among 161 others booked for violating MCC

BALLIA, 9 JUNE

Around 161 people including Samajwadi Party MP Sanatan Pandey were booked for allegedly violating the Model Code of Conduct and prohibitory orders on the counting day, police said on Sunday. The FIR was registered at the Ballia police station by the Station House Officer Sanjay Singh on Saturday against Pandey and others, officials said. According to the FIR, when the counting was underway on 4 June, the accused blocked the road in Ballia, created a traffic jam and violated the model code of conduct, they said. The accused were booked under section 143 (unlawful assembly), 186 (obstructing public servant in discharge of duty), 188 (violating prohibitory orders, and 341 (wrongful restraint), they said. —*PTI*

DIGNITARIES AT SWEARING-IN CEREMONY

Clockwise from top left: BJP MP Kangana Ranaut, Prime Minister of Nepal Pushpa Kamal Dahal 'Prachanda, Bangladeshi Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, Maldives President Mohamed Muizzu, Sri Lanka President Ranil Wickremesinghe, Vice-President of Seychelles Ahmed Afif , Congress President Mallikarjun Kharge, Reliance Industries Chairman Mukesh Ambani along with his son Anant Ambani, Spiritual leader Jagadguru Rambhadracharya and other dignitaries, Actor Rajinikanth, Bollywood actor Shah Rukh Khan attend the oath-taking ceremony of PM Narendra Modi and his cabinet of ministers, in New Delhi on Sunday

PHOTO: PTI/ANI

VK Pandian quits politics after BJD's defeat in Odisha

Pandian said he only joined politics to assist Naveen Patnaik

BHUBANESWAR, 9 JUNE

Exactly six months and 13 days after joining politics, former bureaucrat VK Pandian on Sunday announced his withdrawal from active politics and said he would keep Odisha in the core of his heart and Guru Naveen Babu in his breath.

In a video message, Pandian said his only intention to join politics was to assist Naveen Patnaik, which is why he did not contest in the 2024 elections.

He also apologised to the people and BJD leaders and workers if they held him responsible for the electoral loss.

"My intent in joining politics was only to assist Naveen Babu, and now I consciously decide to withdraw from active politics. I am sorry if I have hurt anyone on this journey. I am sorry if this campaign narrative against me played a part in BJD's loss," Pandian said.

During the campaign, Pandian had asserted that he would quit politics if party President Patnaik did not become the Chief Minister of Odisha for the sixth consecutive time after the assembly elections.

"You (BJP) say there is a BJP wave and a wave for change in Odisha, but I strongly say if the Chief Minister (Patnaik) does not become CM again, I will take 'sanyas' from politics," Pandian had declared at a rally in Brajrajnagar, Jharsuguda district.

Defending his close aide, BJD president Naveen Patnaik on Saturday termed the ongoing criticisms against Pandian as "unfortunate" and praised him for doing an "excellent job."

Patnaik also clarified that Pandian was not his successor. "There has been some criticism of Pandian. This is unfortunate. He joined the party and has not held any post. He did not contest the elections from any constituency. I have always clearly said when asked about my successor that it is not Pandian. I repeat again that the people of Odisha will decide my successor."

"I will always keep Odisha in the core of my heart and my Guru Naveen Babu in my breath and pray to Lord Jagannath for their well-being and prosperity," Pandian said.

Expressing satisfaction, he concluded by saying that the biggest earning in his lifetime has been the love, affection, and goodwill of Odisha.

—*PTI*

VK Pandian quit IAS last year and joined the BJD ***PHOTO: PTI***

- Pandian had asserted that he would quit politics if party President Patnaik did not become the Chief Minister of Odisha for the sixth consecutive time after assembly elections

AMID NEET ROW

Will be your voice in Parl: RaGa to students

NEW DELHI, 9 JUNE

Congress leader Rahul Gandhi hit out at Prime Minister-designate Narendra Modi on Sunday over the NEET-UG medical entrance row, saying the alleged "irregularities" in the examination have devastated more than 24 lakh students even before he takes oath for a new term in office.

Gandhi assured students in the country that he will become their voice in Parliament and strongly raise issues related to their future.

Amid allegations of inflation of marks in the NEET-UG medical entrance exam, the National Testing Agency (NTA) announced on Saturday that the education ministry has set up a four-member panel to review the grace marks awarded to more than 1,500 candidates.

Gandhi said, "Narendra Modi has not even taken oath yet and the irregularities in the NEET exam has devastated more than 24 lakh students and their families."

Six students from a single exam centre topped the exam with maximum marks, while many got such marks which are technically not possible, but the government is continuously denying the possibility of paper leak, the former Congress chief said.

He said Congress had made a robust plan to deal with this 'paper leak industry' running in connivance with the education mafia and the government machinery. The youth have expressed faith in INDIA bloc which will not let their voice be suppressed, he asserted. —*PTI*

PHOTO: PTI

BJP'S SOUTH PUSH

TDP, Janasena likely to get significant roles in Modi govt

NEW DELHI, 9 JUNE

Rewarding BJP's coalition partners in the southern states, Prime Minister-designate Narendra Modi is set to induct several MPs from Andhra Pradesh and Telangana into his Council of Ministers, sources said on Sunday.

Three-time MP Kinjarapu Ram Mohan Naidu is likely to get a Cabinet berth while first-timer Dr Chandra Sekhar Pemmasani may be made a Minister of State.

Industrialist and TDP leader Jayadev Galla congratulated the two leaders on their likely induction. From the BJP's quota in Andhra Pradesh, where it bagged three seats, state unit chief Daggubati Purandeshwari and Narsapuram MP Bhupathi Raju Srinivasa Varma are tipped for ministerial berths.

The Janasena, which won two seats in Andhra Pradesh as a constituent of the NDA, is likely to get the deputy speaker's post in the Lok Sabha.

From Telangana, where the saffron party made huge gains, bagging eight seats of the available 17, Bandi Sanjay and G Kishan Reddy are likely to take oath.

From BJP's quota in Karnataka, four MPs are likely to be inducted into the government. —*PTI*

'Narendra Destructive Alliance': Cong takes swipe at Modi ahead of swearing-in

NEW DELHI, 9 JUNE

Taking a swipe at Prime Minister-designate Narendra Modi, the Congress on Sunday said he will get himself sworn-in this evening as "the leader of the Narendra Destructive Alliance (NDA)" even though he lacks all legitimacy.

Congress general secretary Jairam Ramesh said, "Remember 28th May, 2023? It was the day that Narendra Modi walked into the new Parliament building with the Sengol for which a August 15th 1947 history was fabricated 'to not only justify Modi's pretensions of being Samrat but also to appeal to the Tamil electorate."

"That day itself, I had exposed Modi's fakery using archival material," he said.

"We now know the outcome of that drama. The Sengol remains a respected symbol of Tamil history but the Tamil electorate and indeed India's electorate has rejected Modi's pretensions," Ramesh said.

The Congress leader claimed that Modi has suffered a huge personal, political, and moral defeat.

Modi has been forced to bow to the Constitution that he has subverted in the last decade, Ramesh said.

"A vastly diminished 'one-third' Pradhan Mantri, now lacking all legitimacy, has managed to get himself sworn this evening, as the leader of the Narendra Destructive Alliance (NDA)," he said.

Modi is set to be sworn-in this evening. The dignitaries and special invitees attending the ceremony at the Rashtrapati Bhavan on Sunday evening include leaders from India's neighbourhood and the Indian Ocean Region.

Though the BJP could not get a majority on its own in the recent Lok Sabha polls, the party-led National Democratic Alliance secured 293 out of 543 seats. The Congress got 99 seats in the polls. —*PTI*

Farmer back CISF woman who slapped Kangana

CHANDIGARH, 9 JUNE

Several farmer outfits, including the Samyukta Kisan Morcha (Non-Political) and the Kisan Mazdoor Morcha, on Sunday took out a march in Mohali in support of the CISF woman constable, who allegedly slapped actor and BJP MP-elect Kangana Ranaut.

Farmer leaders demanded that a fair investigation should be conducted into the matter while asserting that there should not be any injustice with the woman constable Kulwinder Kaur.

Adequate security personnel were deployed in the wake of the march, which began from Gurdwara Amb Sahib in Mohali.

Speaking to reporters, farmer leader Sarwan Singh Pandher said that there should be an impartial probe into the matter.

Asserting it should be found out what led to the incident, Pandher said that there should be no injustice with the woman constable.

Farmer leaders also lashed out at Ranaut for allegedly making provocative statements against the people of Punjab.

Kaur was apparently upset with Ranaut over her stance on the farmers' protests.

The CISF, tasked with providing security at airports, has also ordered a court of inquiry into the incident. —*PTI*

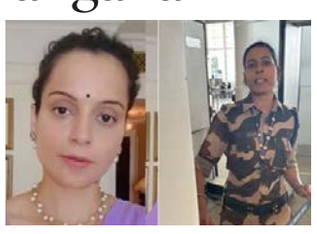


PHOTO: PTI

CAUSE ESTRANGEMENT

AP elections shake up political families

AMARAVATI, 9 JUNE

Besides leaving a trail of violence at a number of places, the fiercely fought simultaneous Lok Sabha and Assembly elections in Andhra Pradesh has shaken up a string of political families resulting in discord and estrangement. Siblings took on each other, a son contested against his minister-father while a determined wife was cajoled to stop competing against her husband at the last moment, among others.

In this battle of blood relatives, YSRCP chief and outgoing Chief Minister YS Jagan Mohan Reddy faced a real challenge from his sister, Andhra Pradesh Congress Chief Y S Sharmila who emerged as a 'thorn in the flesh' for him. After experimenting with politics in Telangana through YSR Telangana Party (YSRTP) and merging it with Congress, Sharmila took over the reins of the grand old party in Andhra Pradesh to target her brother on a daily basis, accompanied several times by her cousin Suneetha Narreddy.

Similarly, the Vijayawada Lok Sabha constituency saw a battle between brothers, K Srinivas and K Sivanath. Srinivas, a transport tycoon-turned-politician from the YSRCP took on his younger brother Sivanath from the TDP. Srinivas (58), the older brother, was a key TDP leader until some months ago but differences with party leaders compelled him to jump ship to YSRCP in January.

In north Andhra region, Duvvada Vani, wife of YSRCP's Tekkali Assembly segment candidate Duvvada Srinivas, for several reasons, almost came close to competing against her husband. At the last moment, senior party leaders successfully persuaded her against doing it.

Likewise, B Ravi Kumar, son of YSRCP Anakapalli Lok Sabha candidate and deputy chief minister B Mutyala Naidu contested as an independent from Madugula Assembly seat against his step-sister E Anuradha and all the three family members lost their elections. —*PTI*

YS Sharmila & YSRCP Chief YS Jagan Mohan Reddy ***PHOTO: X/PTI***

Tripura: 3 die after inhaling toxic gas while cleaning well

AGARTALA, 9 JUNE

As many as three people died in Tripura's Sepahijala district after they inhaled "poisonous gas" that emanated from a well while cleaning it, police said on Sunday. The incident took place on Neoramura JB School premises on Saturday morning, when villagers in Sonamura took a call to clean the well due to water scarcity in the area, they said. "At first, one labourer had gone down to clean the well, but when he did not respond, two others also went inside it... Later, they were found motionless in the well," SDPO (Sonamura) Sashi Mohan Debbarma said. A rescue team rushed to the spot and took the three labourers to hospital, where they were declared brought-dead, he said. "It appears that they died of suffocation inside the well, which was full of poisonous gas. The actual cause will be ascertained after the post-mortem examination," the SDPO said *—PTI*

Thane: 9 booked for protesting against powerlines

THANE, 9 JUNE

A case has been registered against nine persons for allegedly preventing the work of laying powerlines in a village in Maharashtra's Thane district, police said on Sunday. The incident took place in Goteghar village in the limits of Shil-Daighar police station on Friday, an official said. A group of irate villagers allegedly threw stones at the JCB involved in digging work to lay powerlines and threatened to self-immolate, he said. A case under sections 336 (endangering life or personal safety), 341 (wrongful restraint), 427 (mischief causing property damage), and other relevant provisions of the Indian Penal Code has been registered against nine persons, senior inspector Sandeepan Shinde said. A probe is underway, and no arrests have been made, he said.*—PTI*

MP: Woman's body cut & stuffed in bags, found in train

INDORE, 9 JUNE

The GRP on Sunday recovered an unidentified woman's body cut into two pieces, with her hands and legs missing, and stuffed in two bags in a train in Madhya Pradesh's Indore city, an official said. The police suspect the woman was murdered at some other place and the body was dumped in the train on Saturday night, he said. After being informed by a sanitation worker, the body was recovered from Dr Ambedkar Nagar-Indore passenger train, Government Railway Police (GRP) station in-charge Sanjay Shukla said. The deceased, who was yet to be identified, was believed to be in the age group of 20 to 25 years, he said. "The upper part of the woman's body from head to waist was found in a trolley bag left in the train, while the body part below waist was found in a plastic bag. Both her hands and legs are missing," Shukla said. It is suspected the woman was murdered at some other place one or two days back the official said.*—PTI*

Man killed after signboard falls on him in Latur

LATUR, 9 JUNE

A 29-year-old man was killed after a signboard collapsed on him amid strong winds and rains in Maharashtra's Latur district, police said on Sunday. The accident occurred near Ahmedpur on Saturday evening, an official said. The victim, Dnyaneshwar Balaji Sake, a resident of Ashta, was travelling to Shirur-Tajband on his motorcycle, he said. The signboard displaying direction and distance on the highway collapsed due to strong winds and rain when he was passing under it, the official said. An accidental death report was registered, he added. *—PTI*

Situation 'under control' in Jiribam

Militants had torched at least 70 houses

IMPHAL, 9 JUNE

The situation in Manipur's Jiribam district remained "tense" but "under control" on Sunday *PHOTO: PTI*

The situation in Manipur's Jiribam district remained "tense" but "under control" on Sunday, after suspected militants torched two police outposts and at least 70 houses in a fresh bout of violence in the state, police said.

Additional security forces have been deployed in the affected areas following the incident on Saturday, they said.

"The situation is tense but under control in the wake of violent disturbances that broke out in Jiribam district in which miscreants torched two police pickets, a forest beat office... and several houses belonging to both Meitei and Kuki communities," the Manipur Police said in a statement.

More than 70 houses were set on fire in Lamtai Khunou, Dibong Khunou, Nunkhal and Begra villages, a senior police officer said.

"Police is also actively monitoring social media updates, which may incite communal feelings amongst the communities and requests general public to refrain from spreading unfounded/unverified information," it said.

Violence broke out in Jiribam in the ethnic strife-torn state on Thursday evening, after suspected militants killed a 59-year-old man.

The person, identified as Soibam Saratkumar Singh, went missing after he had gone to his farm on 6 June and later, his body was found with wounds made by a sharp object, an official had said.

Meanwhile, an irate mob stopped a truck at Sorok Atingbi Khunou late on Saturday and reportedly torched essential commodities it was carrying, a police officer said.

A contingent of more than 70 state police commandos was airlifted from Imphal to Jiribam to assist security personnel in their operations against militants, he said.

Around 239 Meitei people, mostly women and children, have been evacuated from peripheral areas of Jiribam on Friday, and moved to a newly set up relief camp at a multi-sports complex in the district, officials added.

The state government has also transferred Jiribam SP A Ghanashyam Sharma to the post of additional director of the Manipur Police Training College, according to an order issued by the Department of Personnel and Administrative Reforms.

The transfer order was issued hours after police outposts of Jiri Mukh and Choto Bekra, and the Goakhal forest beat office were set afire on Saturday morning, they said. *—PTI*

MONSOON HITS MUMBAI EARLY

Due to the heavy showers, a part of the road in the neighbouring Palghar district of Maharashtra caved in *PHOTO: NDTV*

Road cave-in hits traffic on Ahmedabad highway

NEW DELHI, 9 JUNE

The southwest monsoon reached Mumbai on Sunday, two days earlier than usual after making an early onset over Kerala and northeastern region on 30 May, according to the India Meteorological Department (IMD).

Last year, the primary rain-bearing system reached Delhi and Mumbai together on 25 June, first time since 21 June, 1961, with Cyclone Biparjoy impacting its progress over southern India and the adjoining western and central parts of the country.

Normally, the monsoon reaches Kerala by 1 June, Mumbai by 11 June, and the national capital by 27 June.

On 15 May, the weather office had announced the onset of monsoon over Kerala by May 31. Mumbai and its neighbouring areas received heavy rains in the last 24 hours, bringing down the mercury and providing relief to residents from the hot and humid weather, officials said on Sunday.

Due to the heavy showers, a part of the road in neighbouring Palghar district of Maharashtra caved-in, affecting traffic movement on the busy Mumbai-Ahmedabad highway for more than four hours on Sunday morning, they said.

Repair works, including of a pipeline, were in progress when a portion of the road in Maljipada area of Palghar caved-in due to heavy rains, an official from the police control room said.

Traffic came to a standstill and movement on both sides of the road was disrupted, he said. Some people held up in the traffic jam since 5.30am on Sunday claimed no agency was attending to the problem.

Various other districts of Maharashtra, including Thane, Nashik, Chhatrapati Sambhajinagar, Ahmednagar, Satara and Jalgaon, also received good showers in the last one day.

In the 24-hour period ending at 8.30am on Sunday, Mumbai received more than 60 mm of rainfall.

The Colaba observatory, situated in south Mumbai where most of the state government's administrative offices are located, recorded 67mm rainfall, while the Santacruz observatory, near the Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj International Airport, recorded 64 mm downpour in the same period, as per the India Meteorological Department (IMD). *—PTI*

Two aircraft came dangerously close on the same runway at Mumbai's Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj International Airport *PHOTO: PTI*

Close shave for 2 planes at Mumbai airport

MEERUT, 9 JUNE

Air India on Sunday issued a statement regarding the 8 June 8 incident where two aircraft came dangerously close on the same runway at Mumbai's Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj International Airport, and said that the Mumbai-Trivandrum flight was cleared by the Air Traffic Control (ATC) to enter the runway.

"AI657 from Mumbai to Trivandrum was on take-off roll on 8 June. The Air India aircraft was cleared by Air Traffic Control to enter the runway and subsequently cleared for take-off. The Air India aircraft continued with the take-off roll in accordance with laid down procedures," the airline said in its statement.

"An investigation has been initiated by the authorities to find out more on the clearance given to the airlines," it added.

This came after the Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) took action by de-rostering an Air Traffic Control officer (ATCO) from Mumbai following a potentially disastrous incident involving two aircraft on the same runway.

The incident occurred early on the morning of 8June at Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj International Airport (BOM).

In the early hours of Saturday, IndiGo flight 5053, arriving from Devi Ahilyabai Holkar Airport (IDR), was landing on Runway 27 while Air India flight 657 was still in the process of taking off for Thiruvananthapuram International Airport (TRV). Both flights involved Airbus A320neo aircraft.

The close timing of the landing and take-off created a hazardous situation that could have resulted in a major accident. *—PTI*

IN BIHAR

Cop mowed down by tractor carrying illegally mined sand

AURANGABAD, 9 JUNE

A constable was mowed down by a tractor illegally transporting sand in Bihar's Aurangabad district on Sunday, police said.

The deceased, identified as Deepak Kumar,29, was on duty to check illegal sand mining when the incident took place at Musepur Khaira village within Daudnagar police station limits around 4 am.

Hailing from Arrah in Bhojpur district, Kumar was rushed to a nearby hospital but was declared brought dead, police added.

Aurangabad SP Swapna Gautam Meshram said, "The incident took place when Kumar spotted a tractor loaded with illegally mined sand. Kumar instructed the driver to halt the vehicle, but he refused and mowed down the constable and fled after abandoning the tractor at the scene."

PHOTO: PTI

Meshram said the tractor has been confiscated, and its owner has been apprehended.

"Police have identified the driver and a manhunt has been launched to apprehend him," she said, emphasising that all those involved in the incident will be apprehended soon.

This incident bears resemblance to a previous incident in November 2023, where a 28-year-old sub-inspector was fatally struck, and a home guard was seriously injured by a tractor carrying illegally mined sand in Jamui district. *—PTI*

Cop's son killed over ransom in Meerut

MEERUT, 9 JUNE

A constable's six-year-old son was allegedly killed in Dhanpur village in Incholi Police Station jurisdiction over ransom, police said on Sunday.

Gopal Yadav, a UP Police Constable, is currently posted in Saharanpur.On Sunday around 8 am, his six-year-old son Puneet disappeared while playing from outside his house. Later, Yadav received a ransom letter with demand for Rs 50 lakh. Initially, police detained a local woman who the family had accused of kidnapping the boy, Senior Superintendent of Police Rohit Singh Sajwan said.

However, soon the family found the boy's body in a sugarcane field in the village.

Circle Officer Navina Shukla told PTI that police were analysing the ransom letter.

The SSP said the victim's family members have alleged that the boy was murdered "intentionally".

The killing could also be a consequence of a land dispute the family had with another family *PHOTO: PTI*

The killing could also be a consequence of a land dispute the family had with another family, he said.

Police have detained four people, two of them women, in the matter for interrogation, he said. *—ANI*

B'desh MP murder: CID quizzes suspect, recovers bones

KOLKATA, 9 JUNE

The West Bengal CID on Sunday recovered parts of human bones near a canal in South 24 Parganas district, during a search operation in connection with its probe into the murder of Bangladesh MP Anwarul Azim Anar, a senior official said.

The specimen was found on the south-eastern bank of Bagjola canal in Bhangar's Krishnamati village, following the interrogation of Mohammad Siyam Hussain, a key suspect in the case who was arrested by the Nepal Police and extradited to India, he said.

"The bone parts appear to be of a human being as suggested by medical officers and forensic experts who were present when these were recovered," the CID officer said.

It has lodged a suo moto case in this regard at the Bijoyganj Bazar Police Station, he said.

The bone parts will soon be sent for forensic examination.

"Search is underway to trace other body parts of the Bangladeshi politician," the officer said.

Sleuths of the CID had earlier recovered pieces of flesh, weighing around 3.5kg, from the septic tank of a flat in New Town area where the MP was last seen on 12 May.

The daughter of the Bangladesh MP is likely to arrive in Kolkata next week to take part in a DNA test in connection with the recovery of the bones and flesh pieces, the CID officer said.A key suspect in the case, Hussain was arrested by the Nepal Police and extradited to India on Friday. *—PTI*

IIT MADRAS SHINES

JEE-Advanced results out, Ved Lahoti tops

NEW DELHI, 9 JUNE

Ved Lahoti and Dwija D Patel were the toppers of the JEE (Advanced) *PHOTO: PTI*

The Joint Entrance Exam (JEE)-Advanced results were announced Sunday morning, with Ved Lahoti from IIT Delhi zone bagging the top rank by securing 355 out of 360 marks.

According to IIT Madras, which conducted the Joint Entrance Exam (JEE)-Advanced this year, Dwija Dharmeshkumar Patel from IIT Bombay zone is the topper among female candidates with 332 marks. Her all India rank is 7.

Four among the top 10 rank-holders are from IIT Madras. The second rank has been bagged by Aditya (Delhi zone) followed by Bhogalpalli Sandesh (Madras zone) at the third position.Rhythm Kedia (IIT Roorkee zone), Putti Kushal Kumar (IIT Madras), Rajdeep Mishra (IIT Bombay zone), Koduri Tejeswar (IIT Madras zone), Dhruvi Hemant Doshi (IIT Bombay zone) and Alladabona SSDB Sidhvik Suhas (IIT Madras zone), have bagged the subsequent ranks in that order.

The maximum number of candidates have qualified from IIT Madras zone, followed by IIT Delhi Zone and IIT Bombay zone. Among the top 500 candidates, 145 are from IIT Madras zone, followed by 136 from IIT Bombay zone and 122 from IIT Delhi zone.A total of seven foreign candidates have qualified the exam while 179 Overseas Citizens of India (OCI) have also cleared it.

Explaining the criteria for inclusion in rank list, a senior IIT Madras official said, "The aggregate marks will be calculated as the sum of marks obtained in Mathematics, Physics and Chemistry. Candidates have to satisfy the subject-wise as well as aggregate qualifying marks to be included in a rank list."

A total of 1,80,200 candidates appeared in both papers in IIT-JEE Advanced, of which 48,248 have qualified including 7964 female candidates. *—PTI*

Will maintain security in LOC: Senior Army officer

SRINAGAR, 9 JUNE

Rajiv Ghai *PHOTO: PTI*

The situation along the Line of Control is stable and security agencies will take all necessary steps to maintain it, a senior Army officer said on Sunday.

General Officer Commanding (GoC) of Army 15 Corps Lt General Rajiv Ghai was talking to reporters at the Bipin Rawat Stadium in Jammu and Kashmir's Baramulla district after a function to felicitate Kargil War veterans on the 25th anniversary of Vijay Diwas.

"The situation on the borders is stable. Whatever is needed to keep the situation stable will be done by the security agencies," Lt General Ghai said.

Asked about Director General of Police (DGP) RR Swain's statement that 70 to 80 foreign terrorists were active in the Union Territory, he said the police chief's remark was factual.

"As far as the numbers are concerned, the DGP has stated a fact. How the security agencies are proceeding against them, you know very well how the operations are conducted," Lt General Ghai added.

DGP Swain on Saturday told reporters in Pulwama that while the number of local terrorists was dropping, there were 70 to 80 foreign terrorists operating in the Union Territory. *—PTI*

PROTESTING NEET

Police use water cannons to disperse Youth Congress activists during a demonstration against alleged irregularities in the NEET entrance exam, in Bhopal
PHOTO: PTI

Will coalition turn Modi into a humble leader?

India is no stranger to coalition governments.

Some of the world's largest coalitions, comprising between six and a dozen parties, have been formed in the world's most populous democracy.

From 1989 to 2004, six general elections produced no single-party majority. Some of these coalitions have been particularly chaotic: between 1989 and 1999, eight were formed and many quickly collapsed.

But some of India's most significant economic reforms and highest growth rates have come under coalition governments, led by both Congress and BJP

Now, for the first time since 2014, India will have a coalition government, with no single-party majority.

Narendra Modi, set for a third term as Prime Minister, has seen his majority reduced by a resurgent opposition, and now primarily relies on two allies in his National Democratic Alliance (NDA) for a parliamentary majority.

But will Modi, who always ruled with a majority as Chief Minister of Gujarat state and as Prime Minister, and dominated politics for a decade, be able to run a coalition?

Can he shed his domineering style and carry disparate regional allies along? And will he curb a growing personality cult stoked by his party and a friendly media to adopt a more consensual, humbler image?

Many believe it's unlikely to be smooth sailing for Modi in a coalition.

The two allies that Modi is most dependent on are two regional parties, Janata Dal (United) and Telugu Desam Party (TDP). They have 28 seats between them. Both are led by veteran, astute leaders - Nitish Kumar and N Chandrababu Naidu, respectively - who have previously served in BJP-led federal coalition governments and then quit over differences with the ruling party, specifically over Modi.

In 2019, while serving as Andhra Pradesh chief minister, Naidu labelled Modi, then his political rival, a "terrorist". Coalition governments dependent on just two or three allies are particularly vulnerable to collapse if even one withdraws support.

The two allies that Modi is most dependent on are two regional parties, Nitish Kumar led Janata Dal (United) and N Chandrababu Naidu's Telugu Desam Party (TDP) ***PHOTO: X/ N CHANDRABABU NAIDU***

Many believe a coalition government under Modi could contribute to a healthier democracy. They say it could reduce the prime minister's dominance, decentralise governance, increase checks and balances, embolden the opposition, and make institutions like the bureaucracy, judiciary and media more independent.

Atal Behari Vajpayee, one of BJP's stalwarts, ran a successful multi-party coalition government from 1998 to 2004. The avuncular leader privatised state-owned firms, facilitated foreign investment, built expressways, relaxed trade barriers, and even ignited an IT revolution.

He ended a decades-old moratorium on nuclear tests, eased tensions with Pakistan and built closer ties with US.

But Modi's coalition is vastly different from the ones in the past.

Despite securing fewer than the 272 seats needed for a majority government, the BJP still took 240 seats, so remains an influential and dominant coalition leader.

And in the past, successful minority governments have been run with even less seats. Congress were able to run a successful minority government with 232 seats in 1991- and with just 145 and 206 seats in 2004 and 2009.

Furthermore, Modi leads an aggressive and revamped BJP. Amit Shah, his closest confidant, embodies a redefined top leadership that Congress leader Shashi Tharoor characterises as a "my way or the highway" approach to governance.

Effective coalition politics demands collective action to function as a bloc and offer checks and balances. The key question now is what major issues the coalition partners and the BJP can agree upon.

Modi's party has been pushing for a controversial plan to hold simultaneous federal and state elections, something India gave up in 1967.

His party has also promised a Uniform Civil Code or UCC, a single personal law for all citizens, irrespective of religion, sex, gender and sexual orientation. This has been resisted in the past by both the country's majority Hindus and minority Muslims.

Modi will also have to listen to regional and state-specific demands from the allies and accommodate their leaders' ambitions. Both TDP and JD(U) have demanded special status for their states, which mean more federal funds. The allies, according to media reports, are also eyeing influential ministries.

Despite a rebounding economy fuelled by government spending, Modi needs to create more jobs and boost incomes for the poor and middle class. India's economy requires many structural reforms in agriculture, land and labour. Mr Modi may need a consultative approach with allies to achieve any of this.

For a man used to basking in spotlight, consensual politics may not come easily to Modi, many believe. *—BBC News*

LETTERS write to us at salarenglishdigital@gmail.com

SALAR سالار

What is the govt's agenda on pollution control?

Only a year is left for the polluted cities of India to clean up their act. In January 2019, the Union environment ministry launched a comprehensive policy framework, the National Clean Air Programme (NCAP), to improve air quality in 131 cities and urban agglomerations that consistently reported high pollution levels.

The aim was to lower the concentration of particulate matter in these cities by up to 40 per cent by 2025-26, from the 2019 level. To enable implementation, NCAP promised performance-linked funding—a first-of-its-kind strategy to curb air pollution.

A massive Rs 19,711 crore was earmarked for the programme. By 2023, as stated in the ministry's Annual Report 2023-24, all the 131 cities showed improvement in the levels of PM10 (particulate matter with a diameter of 10 microns or less). But have these cities managed to reduce air pollution effectively, which can cause a host of illnesses from lung cancer to cardiovascular diseases to low birth weight and lead to premature death? There are questions around this, and let me tell you why.

Here are a few suggestions for the new government to achieve clean air.

Use PM2.5 as benchmark: PM2.5 is a more relevant health indicator to assess improvement in air quality. Besides, the impact of policy action on PM10 levels is difficult to establish, as it is highly impacted by wind-blown dust, loose sub-soil from farmlands, and is released by specific sources like mining and construction.

Choose the right metrics: Since under NCAP, PM10 is used as the indicator to measure progress in air pollution, focus is on dust control. Key combustion sources like transport and industry, which are the major sources of PM2.5, do not receive priority for developing mitigation pathways. Besides, most industrial sources and power plants are located outside municipal boundaries, and thus remain beyond the ambit of city action plans. Small- and medium-scale units that exist in the non-confirming areas of cities are often not considered.

Link policy action with air quality improvement: Currently, there is no way to establish the link between policy action and improvement in pollution levels. Cities ranked high under NCAP for improved PM10 levels do not necessarily rank high under SVS for taking policy action. Similarly, cities that score high for good policy action under SVS can be the worst performing cities under NCAP for not improving PM10 level. In 2022, Lucknow was among the top performers for good action under SVS but in 2023, it was among the worst performers under NCAP. This needs to be fixed.

Go beyond cities: Experience shows that cities cannot meet their clean air benchmark unless a regional approach is taken to reduce trans-boundary pollution. Even though NCAP has taken on board the idea of airshed approach especially targeting the Indo-Gangetic Plain, an inter-state coordination framework is yet to develop

However, state action plans can be leveraged to minimise the influence of upwind pollution sources on downwind air quality within the state.

National policy for local action

Strategies for clean air action related to industry, power plants, public transport infrastructure, waste management and clean fuels need support from the Union government. For instance, although state governments are notifying the list of approved fuels, they cannot often scale up implementation as national policies on pricing and infrastructure for clean fuels are not adequately supportive.

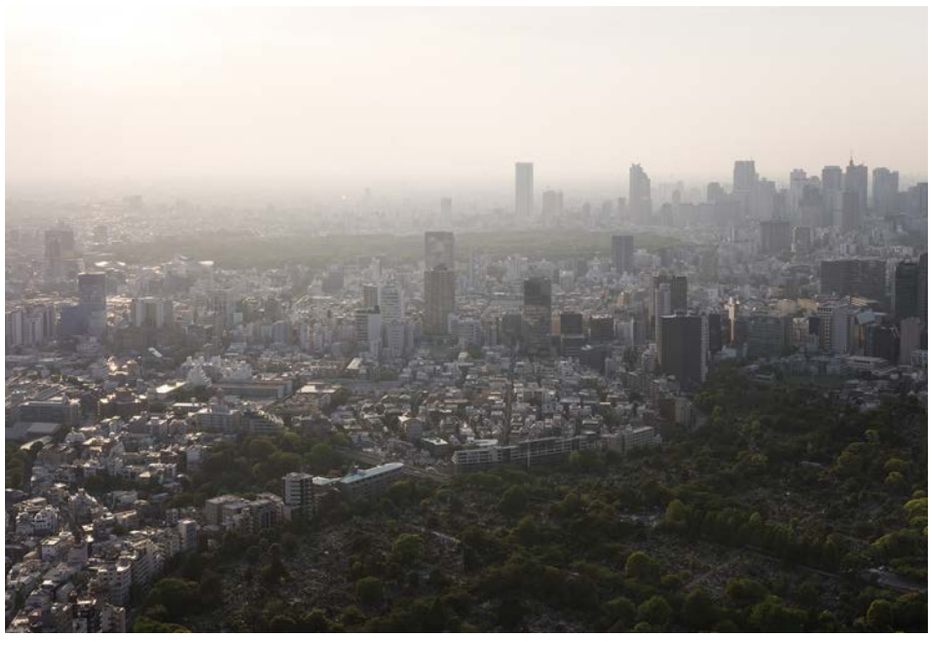
Polluters must pay:

Polluter pays principle must be followed while designing taxes and cesses, and pricing products for additional revenue, which can then be used to create dedicated funds for targeted action. Delhi has imposed an environmental compensation charge on truck entry daily, on each litre of diesel fuel sold and on big cars and SUVs (sports utility vehicles). Since municipalities are the primary driver of action, they can explore green municipal bonds.

Need sectoral targets

NCAP has rightly allowed sector-specific action and funding to align with clean air action. For example, performance-linked funding for garbage-free cities by 2025 under Swachh Bharat Mission 2.0 shows cities are taking action to control waste burning, and that is reported under NCAP. This needs to be scaled up.

—Courtesy Downtoearth



Annual Report 2023-24, all the 131 cities showed improvement in levels of particulate matter with a diameter of 10 microns. But these cities have not managed to reduce air pollution ***PHOTO: FREEPIK***

The temple storming in Amristar still affects the Sikhs today

Activists from various Sikh organisations hold placards and shout slogans at the Golden Temple on the occasion of the 40th anniversary of Operation Blue Star, in Amritsar ***PHOTO: PTI***

Members of the Sikh community have been recalling what their families endured during one of the most brutal periods in the history of their faith.

It is 40 years since Indian armed forces stormed the Golden Temple in Amritsar in Punjab, to remove Sikh separatists who were demanding an independent homeland, called Khalistan.

About 400 people, including 87 soldiers, were killed during Operation Blue Star, which was ordered by then Prime Minister, Indira Gandhi. But Sikh groups dispute this figure, claiming thousands died.

Sikhs across the world accused troops of desecrating the faith's holiest shrine, and tensions led to an armed insurgency lasting more than a decade.

Here, Sikhs in Bedfordshire recount how the events of June 1984 have left lasting scars.

Rasal Singh is a volunteer in the Sikh temple in Luton, and runs a business in Bedfordshire.

His father, Nirmal Singh Chola Sahib, was killed in November 1990.

He said: "My father was arrested and taken to the local police station where he was tortured severely... It was tragic, he was brutally tortured."

- About 400 people, including 87 soldiers, were killed during Operation Blue Star, which was ordered by then Prime Minister, Indira Gandhi. But Sikh groups dispute this figure, claiming thousands died

The father of three said his family "still suffer today".

"The pain is still so raw, the absence of my father has left a void that never truly heals he was tortured and killed, it's left a huge hole in my heart," he said.

"After my dad was killed, my family became homeless, moving from place to place. Even after 40 years, my family is still hurting, and no justice has been served.

"I channel my pain into being a better parent, hoping to give them the sense of completeness that I missed.

"Every hug, every word of encouragement, every moment spent with them is a step towards healing."

Gurjit Singh, from Luton, said his uncle, Paramjit Singh, was a police officer in Punjab before he was killed in the 1990s.

> **The tragic attack on Sri Darbar Sahib in Amritsar, we remember the thousands of lives lost, including men, women, and children**
>
> -Harjinder Singh, Sikh activist for Sovereign Roots

He said: "Innocent people were often tortured and targeted simply for wearing turbans or having beards.

"The police frequently harassed women under false pretences."

He said his uncle became a target for harassment himself while trying to protect a group of women from his colleagues.

"They even targeted his family, including my father, who was also a police officer," he said.

"My uncle had to flee the village, but eventually, they found him, tortured him in jail for 10 days, and then killed him in the fields, staging his death as an escape attempt."

He said that his uncle fled, the whole family was arrested, including children and grandparents.

One family member was nine months' pregnant and was denied medical care, suffering a stillbirth.

"Today after 40 years of fighting for justice, we still don't have it," Mr Singh said.

"Even political parties did not intervene.

"Punjab was in a state of lawlessness and danger. Our family has been shattered, and three generations have been unable to live a normal life."

Harjinder Singh, from Bedford is a Sikh Activist for Sovereign Roots.

The campaign group provides education toolkits on the Sikh religion and political history of Punjab from the times of Maharaja Ranjit Singh.

He said: "As we mark 40 years since the tragic attack on Sri Darbar Sahib in Amritsar, we remember the thousands of lives lost, including men, women, and children.

"An entire generation has been killed, leaving families and the global Sikh community in enduring pain.

"Today, we find ourselves with no refuge or voice to hear our pleas for justice.

The memories of our lost loved ones demand that we seek an independent country, free from oppression we have faced in India." *—BBC News*

PHOTO: X/@PIERSMORGAN

TV host Mosley's body found in Greece; wife confirms death

ATHENS, 9 JUNE

The family of missing British TV presenter Dr Michael Mosley confirmed Sunday that his body has been found on a Greek island. Mosley's wife said in a statement that her husband took the wrong route on a hike and collapsed in a place where his body couldn't easily be seen. Mosley went missing on the island of Symi on Wednesday afternoon. "Michael was an adventurous man, it's part of what made him so special," Dr Clare Bailey Mosley said. "It's devastating to have lost Michael, my wonderful, funny, kind and brilliant husband. We had an incredibly lucky life together. We loved each other very much and were so happy together." She thanked the people of the island of Symi, who she said worked tirelessly to find him. "Some of these people on the island, who hadn't even heard of Michael, worked from dawn till dusk unasked," she said. *—AP*

Pak to send 1,000 students to China for agri training

ISLAMABAD, 9 JUNE

Pakistan's Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif has revealed plans to send 1,000 students to China for advanced agricultural training, a move aimed at boosting the country's agricultural output, according to media reports on Sunday. During his five-day visit to China, Sharif made the announcement while visiting the Yangling Agricultural Demonstration Base in Xi'an. He also extended an invitation to China's North West Agriculture and Forestry University to establish a campus in Pakistan, and instructed the Pakistani ambassador to China to finalize the arrangements. Sharif toured various sections of the facility, including a modern plant production factory showcasing vertical farming methods, and visited the Pakistan Pavilion. Expressing his commitment to modernizing agriculture, Sharif underscored the importance of increasing per acre yields and agricultural exports. *—PTI*

Pak confirms 5th polio case of year after victim's death

ISLAMABAD, 9 JUNE

Pakistan has confirmed the fifth polio case of the year, more than a fortnight after the victim's death, jolting the country's efforts to eradicate the crippling disease. The victim, a two-year-old child from Balochistan's Quetta, died on May 22 before the confirmation of the poliovirus, the Dawn newspaper reported. With the onset of paralysis on April 29, the case was confirmed after six weeks on Saturday, instead of the usual three weeks taken for diagnosis, the report said, quoting an official at the Regional Reference Laboratory of the National Institute of Health (NIH). According to the NIH, the child's legs were affected by the crippling disease initially. He was later shifted to Karachi, but his condition worsened as the disease spread to his arms. He passed away a few weeks later, the report said. *—PTI*

Chinese aircrafts, vessels intrude near Taiwan's territory

TAIPEI, 9 JUNE

In a concerning escalation of regional tensions, Taiwan's Ministry of National Defence reported on Sunday morning a significant presence of China's People's Liberation Army (PLA) aircraft and People's Liberation Army Navy (PLAN) vessels operating in close proximity to its territory. According to Taiwan's Ministry of National Defence, as of 6 am today, a total of 9 Chinese PLA aircraft and 7 PLAN vessels were detected in the vicinity of Taiwan. Of particular alarm was the breach of airspace, with 5 PLA aircraft crossing the median line of the Taiwan Strait, encroaching into Taiwan's northern and southwestern Air Defence Identification Zones (ADIZ). In response to these provocative manoeuvers, Taiwan's ROC Armed Forces have been actively monitoring the situation, swiftly deploying measures to address the unfolding scenario and upholding national security protocols. *—ANI*

Aid delivered to Gaza from repaired US-built pier

Crews delivered about 492 metric tonnes of humanitarian aid

WASHINGTON, 9 JUNE

Badly needed aid has been delivered into Gaza from a newly repaired American-built pier, a US official said Saturday, following problems that had plagued the effort to bring supplies to Palestinians by sea.

The pier constructed by the American military was only operational for about a week before it was blown apart in high winds and heavy seas on 25 May. The damaged section was reconnected to the beach in Gaza on Friday after undergoing repairs at an Israeli port.

Crews delivered about 1.1 million pounds (492 metric tonnes) of humanitarian aid to Gaza via the pier on Saturday, the US official said. They spoke on condition of anonymity ahead of an official announcement of the delivery. It came the same day that Israel mounted a heavy air and ground assault that rescued four hostages, who had been taken by Hamas during the 7 October assault that launched the war in Gaza. At least 210 Palestinians, including children, were killed, a Gaza health official said.

It brings back online one way to get desperately needed food and other emergency supplies to Palestinians trapped by the eight-month-old Israel-Hamas war. Israeli restrictions on land crossings, and fighting, have greatly limited the flow of food and other vital supplies into the territory.

The damage to the pier was the latest stumbling block for the project and the persistent struggle to get food to starving Palestinians. Three US service members were injured, one critically, and four vessels were beached due to heavy seas. *—AP*

Crews delivered about 492 metric tonnes of humanitarian aid to Gaza via the pier on Saturday PHOTO: X/@CENTCOM

Israel saves 4 hostages, kills 274 Palestinians

DEIR AL-BALAH, 9 JUNE

Israel on Saturday carried out its largest hostage rescue operation since the latest war with Hamas began, taking four to safety out of central Gaza in a heavy air and ground assault. At least 274 Palestinians, including children, were killed, a Gaza health official said. Israelis were jubilant as the army said it freed Noa Argamani, 26; Almog Meir Jan, 22; Andrey Kozlov, 27; and Shlomi Ziv, 41, in a daytime operation in the heart of Nuseirat, raiding two locations at once while under fire. *—AP*

Israel-Gaza war: Protesters surround White House

WASHINGTON, 9 JUNE

Thousands of pro-Palestinian protesters in Washington converged around the White House on Saturday, urging President Biden to stop all military aid to Israel and calling for an immediate cease-fire in Israel's war in Gaza.

Holding signs calling Biden a liar, the protesters, mostly clad in red and bearing Palestinian flags, marched around the block of parkland where the White House sits. They spilled across two six-lane boulevards, pushing out tourists, whose faces showed variations of confusion, anger or intrigue. The police presence was heavy, and the US Park Police used pepper spray against a protester at least once. Biden was not at the White House, but in France, where he joined President Emmanuel Macron for a state dinner in Paris on Saturday night. But the dissenting voices in the American capital highlighted the challenges he faces domestically as he tries to carve out a narrow position that both supports Israel's right to defend itself against Hamas and calls for a quick cessation of hostilities. *—Courtesy, The NYT*

The missile hit the ship's forward station PHOTO: BBC/SCREENGRAB

Houthis attack another cargo ship with missile

DUBAI, 9 JUNE

A missile struck an Antigua and Barbuda-flagged cargo ship in the Gulf of Aden on Sunday in a suspected attack by Houthi rebels in Yemen, authorities said.

The missile hit the ship's forward station, starting a fire that those on board later put out, the private security firm Ambrey said. A second missile fired at the ship missed and people "on board small boats in the vicinity opened fire on the ship during the incident," Ambrey added, though no one was hurt onboard.

The British military's United Kingdom Maritime Trade Operations centre similarly reported an attack late Saturday in the same area off Aden, but provided no further details. Suspicion for the attack immediately fell on the Houthis. The rebels did not immediately claim the assault, though it can sometimes take hours or even days for them to acknowledge their attacks.

- The rebels did not immediately claim the assault, though it can sometimes take hours or even days for them to acknowledge their attacks

The Houthis, who seized Yemen's capital nearly a decade ago and have been fighting a Saudi-led coalition since shortly after, have been targeting shipping throughout the Red Sea corridor over the Israel-Hamas war in the Gaza Strip. They say the attacks are aimed at stopping the war and supporting the Palestinians, though the attacks often target vessels that have nothing to do with the conflict.

The war in Gaza has killed more than 36,000 Palestinians there, while hundreds of others have been killed in Israeli operations in the West Bank. It began after Hamas-led militants attacked Israel on 7 October, killing about 1,200 people and taking around 250 hostages. *—AP*

Debris of Russia s-300 missiles PHOTO: THE KIYV POST

Ukraine: Buildings damaged by Russian s-300 missiles

LUHANSK, 9 JUNE

The collapse of part of a five-story residential building in Luhansk on Friday was blamed on a Ukrainian ATACMS missile, but examination of debris shows it was a Russian air defence missile.

The independent Russian news site Insider referred to independent OSINT (Open Source Intelligence) examination of Russian media footage taken at the site of the collapsed entrance to a five-story building in Luhansk, in which six people died and, according to information provided by Oleg Valiev, the Russian-appointed First Deputy Minister of Health of the so-called Luhansk Peoples Republic (LNR), 60 were injured.

The Russian Ministry of defence claimed on Friday, 7 June that the building had been struck by a Ukrainian ATACMS missile and published photographs of debris that it claimed proved it was the US long range missile that caused the damage.

The Insider report on Saturday cited the findings of OSINT analysts Oliver Alexander, said the debris was consistent with the Russian S-300 5v55 air defence missile. His view was endorsed by "Colonel General Staff" posting on Telegram, having examined images published by the Russian Izvestia new site. Special Kherson Cat writing on X/Twitter concluded that the remains were from a Russian 48N6DM S-400 missile.

While they differed in their opinion of which specific missile was involved, all three were certain it was a Russian anti-missile projectile fired over a residential area that had struck the building.

Artem Lysohor the Ukrainian-appointed head of Luhank's regional administration said on his Telegram channel said there had been as many as 20 explosions in the Hostroya Mohila area. *—Courtesy, The Kyiv Post*

Iran nod to 6 candidates for presidential race

DUBAI, 9 JUNE

Iran's Guardian Council on Sunday approved the country's hard-line parliament speaker and five others to run in the country's June 28 presidential election following a helicopter crash that killed President Ebrahim Raisi and seven others.

The council again barred former President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, a firebrand populist known for the crackdown that followed his disputed 2009 re-election, from running. The council's decision represents the starting gun for a shortened, two-week campaign to replace Raisi, a hard-line protege of Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei once floated as a possible successor for the 85-year-old cleric.

The selection of candidates approved by the Guardian Council, a panel of clerics and jurists ultimately overseen by Khamenei, suggests Iran's Shiite theocracy hopes to ease the election through after recent votes saw record-low turnout and as tensions remain high over the country's rapidly advancing nuclear program, as well as the Israel-Hamas war.

The Guardian Council also continued its streak of not accepting a woman or anyone calling for radical change to the country's governance. The campaign likely will include live, televised debates by the candidates on Iran's state-run broadcaster.

They also advertise on billboards and offer stump speeches to back their bids.

So far, none of them has offered any specifics, though all have promised a better economic situation for the country as it suffers from sanctions by the US and other Western nations over its nuclear program, which now enriches uranium closer than ever to weapons-grade levels. *—AP*

2024 EU ELECTIONS

Polls open in 20 EU countries to elect new Parl

BRUSSELS, 9 JUNE

Polls opened on Sunday in 20 European Union countries, from Sweden and Lithuania in the north to Portugal and Cyprus in the south, as voters choose their representatives for the next five-year term of the European Parliament, amid concern that a likely shift to the political right will undermine the ability of the world's biggest trading bloc to take decisions as war rages in Ukraine and anti-migrant sentiment mounts.

Citizens will cast ballots to elect 720 members of the European Parliament. Seats in the assembly are allocated based on population, ranging from six in Malta or Luxembourg to 96 in Germany. Official results of the elections, which are held every five years and began in the Netherlands on Thursday, cannot be published before the last polling stations in the 27 EU nations close — those in Italy at 11 p.m. (2100 GMT). Unofficial estimates are due to trickle in from 1615 GMT.

An unofficial exit poll on Thursday suggested that Geert Wilders' anti-migrant hard right party should make important gains in the Netherlands, even though a coalition of pro-European parties has probably pushed it into second place. Since the last EU election in 2019, populist or far-right parties now lead governments in three nations — Hungary, Slovakia and Italy — and are part of the ruling coalition in others, including Sweden, Finland and, soon, the Netherlands. Polls give the populists an advantage in France, Belgium, Austria and Italy.

The elections come at a testing time for voter confidence in a bloc of some 450 million people. Over the last five years, the EU has been shaken by the coronavirus pandemic, an economic slump and an energy crisis fuelled by the biggest land conflict in Europe since the Second World War.

Chief among them is the presidency of the powerful executive branch, the European Commission, which proposes laws and watches to ensure they are respected. The commission also controls the EU's purse strings, manages trade and is Europe's competition watchdog. *—AP*

Citizens will cast ballots to elect 720 members of the European Parliament PHOTO: X/@TIFANIESWETS

PAK PPP VOICES CONCERNS OVER NATION BUDGET

ISLAMABAD, 9 JUNE

Pakistan Peoples Party has said it was not consulted by the ruling PML-N-led government on the upcoming federal budget despite being a coalition partner, according to a media report on Sunday.

The Pakistan government will likely present the budget for the financial year 2024-25 on 12 June. The government, led by Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif's Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) party, "neither told us anything related to the budget nor took us into confidence," Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) leader Syed Khurshid Ahmed Shah said.

"We don't know what PML-N is doing about privatisation policy, taxes, developmental programme," the report quoted Shah as saying. After the controversial 8 February general elections marred with massive rigging allegations, PML-N and PPP formed a coalition government after intense negotiations following a fractured poll verdict.

Asserting that the Bilawal Bhutto-led PPP does not know anything about relief, Shah said that he's unaware whether the government is making the budget or if the International Monetary Fund's budget is being imposed. *—PTI*

SL made 'strong progress' on debt restructuring front

COLOMBO, 9 JUNE

Sri Lanka's macroeconomic policy reforms have started to "bear fruit" and the country is expected to reach agreements with external commercial creditors soon, the IMF has said ahead of the second review of it's USD 2.9 billion bailout programme to the cash-strapped country.

Addressing a press conference on Friday, International Monetary Fund (IMF) Communication Department Director Julie Kozack asserted that Sri Lanka has made "sufficiently strong progress on the debt restructuring front". She said that the island nation's programme performance is "strong", with most quantitative and structural conditionality for the second review met or implemented with delay, adding that reforms are still ongoing in some areas.

The second review of the IMF's Extended Fund Facility under the USD 2.9 billion bailout of Sri Lanka has been set for 12 June. Kozack confirmed that IMF will meet to discuss the second review and the Article IV Consultation. *—PTI*

BALLOON ROW

S Korea to start loudspeaker broadcasts

SEOUL, 9 JUNE

South Korea has said it will resume propaganda broadcasts against North Korea for the first time in six years in response to Pyongyang's campaign of sending rubbish-filled balloons across the border.

Over 300 North Korean balloons were detected over Saturday and Sunday with around 80 landing in the South carrying scrap paper and plastic sheets. North Korea is yet to respond to the announcement, but Pyongyang considers the loudspeaker propaganda broadcasts an act of war and has threatened to blow them up in the past. Last month North Korea appeared to send at least 200 balloons carrying rubbish over the border in retaliation for propaganda leaflets sent from the south. Over the weekend North Korea resumed its waste campaign against its neighbour by sending balloons carrying sacks of rubbish over the border into South Korea.

It was in retaliation for activists in the South sending 10 balloons containing leaflets critical of the North Korean regime on Friday, according to AFP news agency. South Korea's military said there are no more balloons in the air adding that no hazardous materials have been found.

It has warned the public not to touch the balloons and to be aware of falling objects. The public should report any sightings to the nearest police or military unit, the military added. Following the latest batch of balloons, South Korea's National Security Council said loudspeaker broadcasts on the border would resume on Sunday after agreeing to restart the loudspeakers for the first time since 2018. *—BBC NEWS*

Over 300 North Korean balloons were detected over Saturday and Sunday PHOTO: SOUTH KOREA JOINT CHIEFS OF STAFF

PHOTO: PTI

NCLT initiates insolvency against Himalayan Water

NEW DELHI, 9 JUNE

National Company Law Tribunal (NCLT) has directed initiating insolvency proceedings against Himalayan Mineral Waters, allowing Jammu & Kashmir Bank's plea for default of a corporate guarantee given for LeeL Electricals. Allahabad bench of NCLT has also appointed Bhoopesh Gupta as the interim resolution professional (IRP) for this Dehradun-based firm's Corporate Insolvency Resolution Process (CIRP). Jammu & Kashmir Bank had claimed a default of Rs 50 crore against Himalayan Mineral Waters. Insolvency proceedings were initiated against LeeL Electricals by NCLT in April 2020 over a plea by one of its operational creditors. Later, NCLT passed a liquidation order in December 2021 after it failed to get a buyer. *—PTI*

PV exports rise by 2.68 lakh units in 4 years

NEW DELHI, 9 JUNE

Passenger vehicle exports from India rose by 2.68 lakh units in the last four financial years with Maruti Suzuki India accounting for nearly 70 per cent of the incremental shipments during the period. As per the industry data, passenger vehicle exports in the 2020-21 fiscal stood at 4,04,397 units. It rose to 5,77,875 units in the 2021-22 fiscal year and to 6,62,703 units in 2022-23 financial year. Last fiscal, exports stood at 6,72,105 units, an increase of 2,67,708 units since 2020-21. In the last three fiscal years, Maruti Suzuki has accounted for 70 per cent of the incremental 2,67,708 units across the industry which were shipped to overseas markets. Other major markets include the Philippines, Indonesia and Ivory Coast. *—PTI*

45% rise in housing prices in Ahmedabad

NEW DELHI, 9 JUNE

Housing prices in Ahmedabad have appreciated by an average 45 per cent in the last five years because of rise in demand of residential properties especially after the COVID pandemic, according to PropTiger. The average housing prices stood at Rs 4,150 per square feet in January-March this year, as compared to Rs 2,867 per square feet in the January-March period of 2019, as per the data compiled by real estate consultant PropTiger. The average growth in housing price during January-March 2024 was 10 per cent from the year-ago period. PropTiger.com is part of real estate technology firm REA India, which also owns real estate listing platforms. *—PTI*

Asus bets big on India's personal computer market

TAIPEI, 9 JUNE

India's personal computer (PC) market is better than the rest of the world and low penetration level of the devices offers a good growth opportunity for the Taiwanese tech major Asus, senior company officials have said. The Taiwanese PC maker has seen positive growth in the Indian market. Asus India consumer and gaming PC vice president Arnold Su told PTI that "India's PC penetration per household is around 10 to 11 per cent. Which means around 90 per cent of Indian households still do not have a PC, which means it is a very good opportunity for us," he said. Su said Asus is continuing to invest in India making its product available across the country. "... If you see today in India, out of 750 districts, we have already covered around 450 districts," he added. *—PTI*

Adani Airport Holdings handles 1mn tonne cargo

This represents a significant 7% increase, 30% market share

PHOTO: FREEPIK

MUMBAI, 9 JUNE

Adani Airport Holdings achieved milestone by handling one million tonnes of air cargo in the fiscal year 2023-2024, the company informed the exchange in a filing on Sunday.

The achievement highlights the company's operational capabilities and strategic growth in the aviation industry.

Seven airports facilitated over 10 lakh metric tonnes of cargo in FY 2023-24, capturing an impressive 30.1 per cent market share.

Demonstrating solid growth the seven airports under Adani airport holdings facilitated 10,13,115 metric tonnes of cargo in FY 2023-24, capturing an impressive 30.1 per cent market share. This represents a significant 7 per cent y-o-y increase compared to the previous fiscal, when the total cargo tonnage was 9,44,912 metric tonnes.

The international cargo tonnage amounted to 6,62,258 metric tonnes, recording a notable 9 per cent y-o-y growth compared to the previous fiscal's 6,06,348 metric tonnes.

"At Adani Airport Holdings Limited, we have been consistently setting new benchmarks for operational efficiency. The cargo terminals have achieved a remarkable milestone, handling over 1 million tonnes this fiscal year. This achievement solidifies our position as key facilitators in both international and domestic airfreight operations in India" said Arun Bansal, CEO, AAHL.

Adani Airport Holdings Mumbai international airport witnessed the highest recorded volumes for the fiscal year in March 2024.

At Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel International Airport (Ahmedabad) the company successfully handled Indigo's first A320 neo freighter on 18 May, 2024

The International cargo operations at Chaudhary Charan Singh International Airport (Lucknow) achieved the highest-ever volume of 700 tonnes in March 2024

During 2023-24, the company also made notable additions of new freight operators including Challenge Group, CMA CGM Air Cargo, Air Pace, Kenya Airways, Indigo, and Uganda Airlines. *—ANI*

ON POLL RESULTS

FPIs take Rs 14.8K crore from equities

NEW DELHI, 9 JUNE

PHOTO: PIXABAY

Foreign investors withdrew nearly Rs 14,800 crore from domestic stocks in the first week of this month, influenced by India's Lok Sabha election results and attractive valuations of Chinese stocks.

The outflow came following a net outflow of Rs 25,586 crore in May on poll jitters and more than Rs 8,700 crore in April on concerns over a tweak in India's tax treaty with Mauritius and a sustained rise in US bond yields.

Before that, FPIs made a net investment of Rs 35,098 crore in March and Rs 1,539 crore in February, while they took out Rs 25,743 crore in January, data with the depositories showed.

According to the data, Foreign Portfolio Investors (FPIs) made a net withdrawal of Rs 14,794 crore this month (till 7 June).

The general election results in India significantly influenced foreign investor flows in Indian equity markets in June.

FPIs regard Indian valuations to be very high and, therefore, capital is getting shifted to cheaper markets.

On the other hand, FPIs invested over Rs 4,000 crore in the debt market. Prior to this, foreign investors put in Rs 13,602 crore in March, Rs 22,419 crore in February and Rs 19,836 crore in January.

This inflow was driven by the upcoming inclusion of Indian government bonds in the JP Morgan Index.

Market experts believe that long-term outlook for FPI flows into Indian debt is positive due to India's inclusion in global bond indices.

However, near-term flows are being impacted by global macroeconomic uncertainty and volatility.

Overall, FPIs withdrew a net amount of Rs 38,158 crore from equities in 2024 so far. *—PTI*

Mcap of 8 of top-10 valued firms jumps Rs 3.28 lakh cr

NEW DELHI, 9 JUNE

PHOTO: ANI

Eight of the 10 most valued domestic firms together added Rs 3.28 lakh crore to their market valuation last week, with blue-chips Tata Consultancy Services, Hindustan Unilever and Reliance Industries emerging as the biggest winners.

In an eventful week, the BSE benchmark jumped 2,732.05 points or 3.69 per cent.

The 30-share BSE Sensex jumped 1,720.8 points or 2.29 per cent to hit a new record peak of 76,795.31 in intra-day trade on Friday. The benchmark ended at a record high of 76,693.36, up 1,618.85 points. From the top-10 pack, Reliance Industries, Tata Consultancy Services (TCS), HDFC Bank, Bharti Airtel, ICICI Bank, Infosys, Hindustan Unilever (HUL) and ITC were the gainers. These companies added a total of Rs 3,28,116.58 crore to their market valuations.

State Bank of India and Life Insurance Corporation of India (LIC) were the laggards from the top-10 pack.

Mcap of HDFC Bank soared Rs 32,241.67 crore to Rs 11,96,325.52 crore and Bharti Airtel climbed Rs 32,080.61 crore to Rs 8,10,416.01 crore.

However, the mcap of LIC declined by Rs 12,080.75 crore to Rs 6,28,451.77 crore and that of State Bank of India went lower by Rs 178.5 crore to Rs 7,40,653.54 crore.

In the ranking of the most valued firms, Reliance Industries retained the title of number one company followed by TCS, HDFC Bank, Bharti Airtel, ICICI Bank, State Bank of India, Infosys, LIC, Hindustan Unilever and ITC. *—PTI*

Fed rate, global cues to drive mkts this week

NEW DELHI, 9 JUNE

The US Fed interest rate decision, domestic inflation data and global trends would be key driving factors in dictating movement in the market this week, as the Lok Sabha elections outcome and the RBI policy decision are behind us, analysts said.

The past week was a roller-coaster ride for investors as markets swung sharply in both directions before closing with strong gains.

In an eventful week, the BSE benchmark jumped 2,732.05 points or 3.69 per cent and the Nifty zoomed 759.45 points or 3.37 per cent.

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- In an eventful week, the BSE benchmark jumped 2,732.05 points or 3.69 per cent and the Nifty zoomed 759.45 points or 3.37 per cent

Globally, significant events are scheduled for June 12, 2024, including announcement of the US core and consumer price inflation figures, alongside the US Federal Reserve's interest rate decision and Federal Open Market Committee (FOMC) economic projections, he added.

Trading activity of foreign investors would also be crucial in dictating terms in the market. *—PTI*

PHOTO: ANI

India to have stronger Lufthansa-AI ties

DUBAI, 9 JUNE

India is a big aviation market and a stronger partnership between Air India and Lufthansa is good, as efforts of the Star Alliance are to bring the partners together to provide a unique value proposition for the passengers, the airline grouping's CEO Theo Panagiotoulias has said.

Air India and Lufthansa are part of the Star Alliance, whose 26 member airlines come together at more than 50 global hubs to offer smooth connections across a global network.

A management company, based in Frankfurt and Singapore, coordinates Star Alliance projects and activities. It includes airport co-location, digital infrastructure, frequent flyer integration and joint business lounge projects to improve the travel experience.

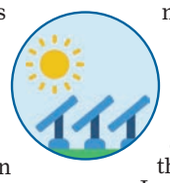
Star Alliance has 50 standards for the member airlines and the effort is to provide a strong value proposition to customers.

As per the alliance's website, connecting partners and intermodal partners extend its network beyond the 1,200 airports currently served by the 26 member airlines. *—PTI*

Solar open access capacity doubles to 1.8 GW: Mercom

NEW DELHI, 9 JUNE

Open access solar installations rose two-fold in India to 1.8 gigawatts during January-March this year supported by several factors, including reduced module cost, US-based Mercom Capital has said.



Solar power through open access is an arrangement where a power producer establishes a solar power plant to supply green energy to consumers.

India added over 1.8 gigawatts (GW) of solar open access capacity in the first quarter of the calendar year of 2024, posting a two-fold increase from 909.3 megawatts (MW) in Q4 2023, the report titled 'Mercom India Solar Open Access Market' said.

As of March 2024, the cumulative installed solar open access capacity stood at 14.3 GW.

Solar open access developers benefited from lower Chinese module prices and the suspension of the Approved List of Models and Manufacturers (ALMM) order for projects commissioned through March 2024.

In Q1 2024, Rajasthan led solar open access capacity additions, accounting for almost 28 per cent followed by Andhra Pradesh and Maharashtra with 21 per cent and 12 per cent of capacity additions, respectively. *—PTI*

Air India utilising group airlines' engineering skills for maintenance

NEW DELHI, 9 JUNE

PHOTO: PTI

Tata Group-owned Air India is utilising the engineering skills available with group airlines to carry out more maintenance work of the aircraft under its own quality control amid multiple instances of its legacy planes facing operational issues, according to a senior company official.

The official also said the airline is keen to lease aircraft but the market is very tight, especially for wide-body planes.

After the takeover by the Tata Group in 2022, loss-making Air India has been making efforts for improvement and has embarked on a five-year transformation plan.

To address the engineering issues more effectively, the official told PTI that Air India is bringing the work of line maintenance component in-house as well as using the licensing and skills of the group airlines to do some things in certain types of aircraft.

Air India is setting up a maintenance base in Bengaluru and the facility will be operational by the end of next year.

The group has four airlines -- Air India, Air India Express, AIX Connect (formerly AirAsia India), and Vistara.

In recent weeks, at least four ultra-long-haul flights of Air India, operated by Boeing 777 aircraft, faced inordinate delays due to technical and operational issues. Air India has at least 43 legacy wide-body planes -- 16 Boeing 777s and 27 Boeing 787s.

Last year, Air India placed an order for 470 planes with Airbus and Boeing. *—PTI*

DEFECTIVE CONTAINERS

Lupin recalls 51K bottles of generic antibiotic drug in US

NEW DELHI, 9 JUNE

Products manufactured are shipped to 200 countries PHOTO: LUPIN.COM

Drug firm Lupin is recalling over 51,000 bottles of a generic antibiotic medication in the US market due to a "defective container", according to the American health regulator.

The US-based arm of the drug maker is recalling 51,006 bottles of Cefdinir for Oral Suspension (250 mg/5 mL) due to "defective container: lack of seal integrity," US Food and Drug Administration (USFDA) said in its latest Enforcement Report. Cefrine Oral Suspension is indicated for the treatment of a range of bacterial infections.

The affected lot has been manufactured at Lupin's Mandideep-based plant and marketed in the US by Baltimore-based Lupin Pharmaceuticals, Inc, it said. The drug maker initiated the Class II nationwide (US) voluntary recall on 8 May this year.

As per the USFDA, a Class II recall is initiated in a situation in which the use of, or exposure to, a violative product may cause temporary or medically reversible adverse health consequences or where the probability of serious adverse health consequences is remote.

India is the largest supplier of generic medicines with around 20 per cent share in the global supply by manufacturing 60,000 different generic brands across 60 therapeutic categories.

The products manufactured are shipped to over 200 countries, with Japan, Australia, West Europe as main destinations. *—PTI*

TO ATTRACT 18% GST

Instant mixes for dosa, khaman cannot be classified as sattu

NEW DELHI, 9 JUNE

Small amounts of ingredients which are mixed to make Sattu are specified in the GST rules to be eligible for a 5% tax rate PHOTO: UNSPLASH

Instant mixes, including idli, dosa and khaman flour, cannot be classified as chhatua or sattu and 18 per cent GST should be levied on them, the Gujarat Appellate Authority for Advance Ruling (GAAAR) has ruled.

Gujarat-based Kitchen Express Overseas Ltd had approached the AAAR against the ruling by the GST advance authority, saying that its seven 'instant flour mixes' are not 'ready to eat' but are required to undergo certain cooking procedures and can be termed 'ready to cook'.

The company sells flour mixes of gota, khaman, dalwada, dahi-wada, dhokla, idli and dosa in powder form and pleaded that it is akin to Sattu and should attract Goods and Services Tax (GST) of 5 per cent.

The GAAAR rejected the appellant's contention, saying that ingredients which go into the making of 'instant flour mixes" are not covered under the relevant GST rules as is the case with Sattu.

According to a CBIC circular, small amounts of ingredients, which are mixed to make Sattu, are specified in the GST rules to be eligible for a 5 per cent tax rate.

The appellate authority also said that merely because the end consumer of the instant mix flour is required to follow certain food preparation processes before such products can be consumed is no grounds that 18 per cent GST should not be levied on it. *—PTI*

FRENCH OPEN FINAL

Coco Gauff wins her first Grand Slam doubles title

Siniakova owns a career Slam in women's doubles alongside partner Barbora

GEORGETOWN, 1 JUNE

Coco Gauff won her first Grand Slam doubles title by teaming with Katerina Siniakova for the French Open trophy on Sunday.

Gauff, a 20-year-old American who won the U.S. Open singles title last year, and Siniakova, who is from the Czech Republic, defeated Italians Jasmine Paolini and Sara Errani 7-6 (5), 6-3 on Court Philippe Chatrier.

It was Gauff's third women's doubles final after losing championship matches at Roland Garros in 2022 and the U.S. Open in 2021.

Gauff and Siniakova both kissed the Coupe Simonne Mathieu — the winners' trophy.

"Third time's a charm. Thank you, Katerina, for playing with me. We decided two days before the tournament to play together," Gauff said. "Thank you to the fans. I know 11:30 Sunday morning is early for most people. It's early for me."

Paolini was also the runner-up in the singles final at Roland Garros to four-time champion Iga Swiatek on Saturday. Swiatek beat Gauff in the singles semifinal.

"The last two weeks were very nice, very emotional," Paolini said. "I have a lot of memories. I can't wait to be back."

Coco Gauff with Katerina Siniakova — PHOTO: X/@ROLANDGARROS

Siniakova owns a career Slam in women's doubles alongside partner Barbora Krejcikova and has won eight majors — including the French Open in 2018 and 2021. Errani also owns a career Slam in doubles alongside her former partner Roberta Vinci. The Italian pair won the French Open title in 2012 — the year Errani lost the singles final.

"It's really special to be in this court again. I don't know how many more years I have to play. But, it's always special to play these kinds of matches," the 37-year-old Errani said.

"It will be special to play the Olympics here in this place. So, I'll see you in one month."

Paolini was playing in her first final in women's doubles.

Errani's serve was broken twice in the first set, and Paolini stayed on the baseline to compensate in the 11th game. The tactic worked as Errani held serve. —*AP*

Puja created history with her win — PHOTO: X / @TOMAR_PUJA

Puja becomes first Indian to win in UFC

KENTUCKY, 9 JUNE

Anshul Jubli and Bharat Kandare have represented India on the world stage in the UFC, as has Canada-based Arjan Singh Bhullar.

India's Puja Tomar scripted history as she became the first mixed martial arts fighter from the country to win a bout at the Ultimate Fighting Championship (UFC) in UFC Louisville here.

Debutant Tomar eked out a 30-27, 27-30, 29-28 split-decision win over Brazil's Rayanne dos Santos in the straw-weight (52kg) bout on Saturday.

"This win is not my win. This win is for all Indian fans and all Indian fighters. before everyone thought that Indian fighters did not stand anywhere. I only thought I have to win and show the world that Indian fighters are not losers," Tomar told Sony Sports Network after her win.

The 30-year-old, known as "Cyclone", signed a contract with the UFC last year in October to become the first woman from India to compete in the biggest Mixed Martial Arts promotion.

"I feel great, I had come from home thinking that I would win. I have worked hard that's why I am here and the crowd is cheering me. I was very strong and motivated so that's why I won."

Born in Budhana village of Uttar Pradesh's Muzaffarnagar, Tomar is a five-time national wushu champion and also has a background in karate and taekwondo.

"I was confident of winning, I attacked a lot. But I wasn't able to give my 100 percent. I felt pressured in the second round. I need to improve on a lot of skills like takedowns.

"My MMA journey was not easy, this win is for my mother, she has fought with the world for me. So this win is for her."

—*PTI*

Indian women lose 2-3 to Great Britain

LONDON, 6 JUNE

The Indian women's hockey team went down fighting 2-3 to Great Britain in their FIH Pro League match here on Sunday, extending their run of losses to eight matches.India thus ended their Pro League season with a heartbreaking defeat to the home team, having played well for the majority of the match before Grace Baldson's (56' and 58') quick-fire brace snatched victory for Great Britain.Two calls went against go against India, including a video review leaving coach Harendra Singh frustrated. With the score reading 2-2 and the final hooter approaching, Badlson struck the winner -- a powerful drag flick hitting the bottom corner.Badlson thus broke Indian hearts once again three years after scoring the winner at the Tokyo Olympics that gave Britain the bronze medal.—*PTI*

Sanjivani bags top spot in 10,000m event

PORTLAND, 9 JUNE

Asian Championships bronze medallist runner Sanjivani Jadhav won the grueling women's 10,000m race at the Portland Track Festival High-Performance Meet, clocking a personal best time of 32:22.77 seconds here.

Portland has turned out to be a happy hunting ground for the 27-year-old long-distance runner, who had finished second in the event last year, registering 32:46.88 seconds, her first sub-33 mark.

Another Indian in the fray, Seema finished fifth clocking 32:55.91. Commonwealth and Asian Games medallist, Avinash Sable clocked 8:21.85 seconds in men's 3000m steeplechase to finish second, though he was a good 10 seconds adrift of his national record of 8:11.20, set at the 2022 CWG where he had won the silver medal. American Kenneth Rooks, winner of the 3000m steeplechase national title at the 2023 USA Outdoor Track and Field Championships, took the top spot clocking 8:18.77, and coming close to the meet record of 8:18.55. Ace Indian women's long-distance runner Parul Chaudhary, winner of gold (5000m) and silver (3000m steeplechase) at the Hangzhou. —*PTI*

Treesa and Gayatri — PHOTO: PTI

Kavin Samaar — PHOTO: X / @ISRL_OFFICIAL

Kavin retires due to technical snag

MOTEGI, 9 JUNE

Honda Racing India could not earn any points from Race 2 of Round 3 at the FIM Asia Road Racing Championship as Kavin Samaar Quintal did not finish the race due to engine issues with his bike, while Mohsin Paramban ended in P17 in the AP250 class, here on Sunday.

With 10 points in his kitty and lying in 14th place before Race 2 of the third round here, Kavin needed a solid performance to close the gap with his nearest rival -- Nguyen Huu Tri of Vietnam.

Kavin was four points behind the Vietnamese, who race for Honda Racing Vietnam. However, starting 18th on the grid, it was a herculean task for the Indian rider, who trains in Spain.

Still, he fought well after losing a position early into the race to Vrei-Ar Marcosuba from JRT Tech -2.

By Lap 3, Kavin had got back his grid position, going past Vrei-Ar and Watcharin Tubtimon from the NJT Racing team. When the gap between Kavin and the riders ahead began to increase, it appeared the Indian was probably struggling with his speed.

From +6 seconds, it gradually went up to +10 seconds. He needed to pass China's Gao Ziang and Mohammad Diandra Trihardika to get into points contention but the declining speed only made it more challenging. Meanwhile, Diandra pushed Wang down to move to 17th position but the Indian team's worst fears came true when Kavin retired in Lap 6. —*AP*

South Africa takes on plucky Bangladesh

NEW YORK, 9 JUNE

South Africa will hope for a better batting performance when they take on a plucky Bangladesh in their Group D match of the T20 World Cup here on Monday.

Both teams will have their task cut out as they will have to navigate the unpredictable surface at the Nassau County International Cricket Stadium. While South Africa may have a slight edge having played their previous two games here, Bangladesh are somewhat familiar with the conditions having faced India in their warm-up fixture at this venue.

South Africa labored to victory against the Netherlands on Saturday and their batters didn't look comfortable in the

PHOTO: X / @T20WORLDCUP

win against Sri Lanka either while chasing 103 and 77 respectively.

The Proteas are not expected to tinker with their four-pronged pace attack comprising Anrich Nortje, Kagiso Rabada, Marco Jansen, and Ottneil Baartmen that has served them well in the tournament so far with Keshav Maharaj taking on the spin duties.

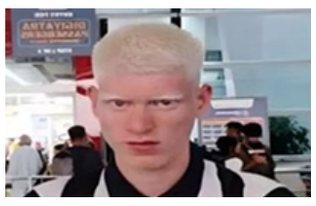
The batters, however, will have to do better. Against the Netherlands, South Africa managed just 33 after 10 overs.

Had it not been for their No. 4 Tristan Stubbs and David Miller, who walked in at number six to score an unbeaten fifty, the Proteas would have been staring at a hat-trick of defeats at the hands of the Dutch at the World Cups.

A win will put South Africa firmly in the driver's seat for a Super Eight spot.

History is also on South Africa's side as they haven't ever lost to Bangladesh in T20Is and have beaten the Tigers in each of the last two editions of the World Cup.

Bangladesh began their campaign with a win over rivals Sri Lanka which will boost their morale. The match starts at 8 pm IST. —*PTI*



Shubhankar Sharma — PHOTO: PTI

Hamirpur athlete wins two gold

HAMIRPUR, 9 JUNE

Saurabh Sharma, an athlete from Himachal Pradesh's Hamirpur district, has won two gold medals in the World Para Athlete Grand Prix in Nottwil City Switzerland. Sharma emerged victorious in 155-metre and 5000-metre races.

Sharma, who hails from Ropa Khayah village in the Nadaun area in Hamirpur district, represents the Indian team in the T12 category. This championship, which started on June 6, will conclude on 9 June.

He had earlier won seven gold medals at the national level."Saurabh started his sports journey from a young age and today he has also fulfilled his dream of representing India and winning a medal for the country," said Sharma's elder brother Vikas. Sharma is currently studying at the National Drishti Divyangjan Empowerment Institute in Dehradun. His coach Naresh Singh Nayal expressed happiness over Sharma's excellent performance. —*AP*

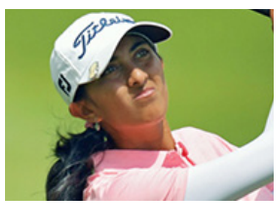


PHOTO: PTI

Aditi Ashok misses cut at LPGA Classic

GALLOWAY, 9 JUNE

Two late birdies were not enough to help Aditi Ashok make the cut at the ShopRite LPGA Classic on the LPGA Tour. The Bengaluru golfer, who shot 2-under 69 in the first round, faltered on the second day as she was 2-over after 13 holes. She birdied the 16th and the 18th but failed to make the final round in windy conditions that made scoring tough. She was 2-under for two rounds and missed the cut by one.—*PTI*

INDONESIA OPEN: WEI CHONG-KAI WUN COMES UP SHORT IN FIRST MAJOR FINAL

JAKARTA, 9 JUNE

National men's doubles pair Man Wei Chong-Tee Kai Wun blew a first-game win to go down 21-19, 16-21, 12-21 to China's Liang Wei Keng-Wang Chang in the final of the Indonesia Open at the Istora Senayan here today.

The world number 20 Wei Chong-Kai Wun did well to win the opening game in their first major final but failed to keep the momentum going in the next two as the world number two from China fought back to clinch victory in 55 minutes.

The Malaysians have yet to beat the China pair in four meetings in the past two years.

Wei Chong-Kai Wun — PHOTO: X / @BADMINTONJUST

"In the third game, they quickly got into their rhythm, so it was difficult for us to catch up.

"We still have a lot to learn, especially in terms of confidence and mentality. We weren't bad in this tournament," Wei Chong said.

Kai Wun then chipped in: "In the first game, they just followed our playing style. In the third game, they changed their strategy and we couldn't get the points.

—*AP*

PHOTO: PTI

Avani Prashanth cuts LET Access Series

MONTAUBAN, 9 JUNE

Avani Prashanth cut a disappointing 78 in the second round of the Montauban Ladies Open on the LET Access Series.Avani, who with a round of 71 was T-14 after the first day, faced the danger of missing the cut as she triple-bogeyed the par-4 15th, bogeyed the par-4 17th and double-bogeyed the par-4 18th. At 5-over for two rounds she was tied 46th. The other Indian in the field, Durga Nittur (75-81) missed the cut. Australia's Kelsey Bennett stayed one shot ahead heading into the final round. The New South Wales golfer had a commanding start with two birdies in the first three holes but then started to struggle and scored three bogeys in a row.—*PTI*

COPA AMERICA WARMUP

Colombia routs sloppy US 5-1

LANDOVER, 9 JUNE

Matt Turner kept falling to the field, the American goalkeeper punching the ground in frustration.

A defensive lapse by Antonee Robinson and aimless defensive play by Johnny Cardoso, Tim Weah, and Cameron Carter-Vickers led to four goals in an embarrassing 5-1 defeat to Colombia in a Copa America warmup match on Saturday.

"I'm going to apologize to the fans," Turner said. "That's not what we're about. And, yeah, we need to bounce back in a big way."

Since a 5-1 loss to Czechoslovakia in the 1990 World Cup, the U.S. had given up that many goals only in a 5-0 loss to Mexico in the 2009 CONCACAF Gold Cup final. It was the Americans' first four-goal loss since a 4-0 defeat in a 2016 World Cup qualifier at Costa Rica that caused the U.S. Soccer Federation to fire coach Jurgen Klinsmann.

Jhon Arias put Colombia ahead in the sixth minute after the ball deflected to him when Robinson tried a sliding clearance without checking who was near. Rafael Santos Borré doubled the lead with a spectacular overhead kick in the 19th. The U.S. had not given up two goals in the first 20 minutes since a March 2016 World Cup qualifier.

Weah cut the deficit to 2-1 in the 58th, but Cardoso's turnover led to Richard Ríos' goal in the 77th, Weah's giveaway to Jorge Carrascal's in the 85th, and Carter-Vickers' pass that didn't appear aimed at anyone to Luis Sinisterra's in the 88th.

"We had a lot of trouble through the middle," Weah said.

Colombia extended its winning streak to seven and its unbeaten string to 22 since a 1-0 defeat at Argentina in a World Cup qualifier on Feb. 1, 2022.

"Everybody could look in the mirror after that game or needs to look in the mirror after that game and figure it out," Turner said. "They just had a different intensity about them that we didn't have."

The U.S. has six losses and two draws against the Colombians since 2005 and is winless in five games against South American opponents since 2019.

—*AP*

Jorge Carrascal celebrates with Richard Rios after a goal against the United States — PHOTO: X / @CARRASCALL

- A defensive lapse by Antonee Robinson and aimless defensive play by Johnny Cardoso, Tim Weah, and Cameron Carter-Vickers led to four goals in an embarrassing 5-1 defeat to Colombia in a Copa America warmup match on Saturday.

Pedri brace helps Spain thrash Northern Ireland before Euros

LONDON, 9 JUNE

Pedri Gonzalez struck twice for Spain as they thumped Northern Ireland 5-1 in their final friendly ahead of Euro 2024 on Saturday. Alvaro Morata, Fabian Ruiz, and Mikel Oyarzabal also netted for Luis de la Fuente's side in Mallorca, with wingers Nico Williams and Lamine Yamal oozing menace on the flanks. Spain, in a Euros 'group of death' with Italy, Croatia, and Albania, is aiming to win the competition for the fourth time. "I've worked hard to be in good shape at the end of the season," Pedri told Radio Marca.

The playmaker was out injured for a large part of the season but has hit top form in the final weeks of the campaign.

"Injuries are the worst thing about football, now I am doing a lot better," continued Pedri.

"We'll go for (the Euros), with the idea of winning."

Spain thrashed Andorra 5-0 in a friendly earlier in the week before dismantling Northern Ireland.

The visitors surprised Spain by taking the lead through Dan Ballard, who headed home a Caolan Boyd-Munce free-kick after just two minutes.

Isaac Price came close to a second before Spain recovered their poise and took complete control. —*AP*

Spain's midfielder Pedri celebrates after scoring his team's third goal — PHOTO: X / @PEDRI